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THE HEBREW TEXT, AND A LATIN VERSION
OF
T H E B O O K O F S O L O M O N,
CALLED
E C C L E S I A S T E S ;
WITH
O R I G I N A L N O T E S ,
PHILOLOGICAL AND EXEGETICAL,
AND A TRANSLATION OF THE COMMENTARY OF MENDELSSOHN
FROM THE RABBINIC HEBREW.
ALSO
A NEWLY ARRANGED ENGLISH VERSION OF ECCLESIASTES, WITH
INTRODUCTORY ANALYSES OF THE SECTIONS;
TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
A PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION.

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THE PREFACE.

THE object of the following pages is the exhibition and verification of a method of translating and dividing the book of Solomon called Ecclesiastes, which will be found, I think, to contribute not a little towards a complete demonstration of the perspicuity of its language and style, and the uniform accordance of its arguments and conclusions with the general tenor of scriptural doctrine. The manifest imperfection in these important qualities of our received English and other approved versions of it cannot fail more or less to have engaged the attention of their readers, and to have produced a corresponding desire for satisfactory evidence that the same defects do not belong to their original. Such at least had long been the case with myself, and especially since I found, on consulting several of the most distinguished Commentators, that many of the most obscure passages in them had been either totally neglected or very insufficiently explained, and that others, whose sense was apparently at variance with the rest of Holy Writ, had on that account been unhesitatingly construed into a sense nearly the reverse of their primary and obvious one.

I am therefore desirous to express my obligations to Mr Bernard, the learned and accomplished teacher of Hebrew in this University, as well for important assistance in the acqui-

sition of the Sacred Tongue, as for having some time since directed my attention to the commentaries of Mendelssohn on this book. My speedy conviction of their value led me to form the design of rendering them accessible to those of my countrymen who may not possess the opportunity of studying them in the original. In this undertaking I have not been anticipated by any English writer, and the existence of a translation of them by J. J. Rabe, the translator of the Mishneh, does not lessen its necessity or importance; in the first place, because he wrote in German; and in the next, because the only edition of his work, published in the year 1771, is not to be met with in this country, and has already become so scarce in Germany that I have not been able to procure a copy of it.

As I proceeded with my task I found not a few instances in which Mendelssohn's annotations, admirable as they are, appeared by no means sufficient, and conceived that by forming an entirely new translation of Ecclesiastes I might succeed in combining the results of his explanations with such suggestions on the part of others or myself as might be manifest improvements upon them. This translation I now present to the public. In order that the reader "משכל בלהק" may as far as possible be satisfied of its correctness, I have given an original Latin version of it on alternate leaves with the Hebrew Text of the book as revised by Van der Hooght and Hahn, arranged for facility of comparison so as for their corresponding verses to be on opposite pages, and below both copious notes, principally original, but partly compiled from various sources, modern and Rabbinic, in which I have fully discussed the passages of which my translation differs from

that in ordinary use, in the endeavour to establish the superiority of the former. Along with these notes will be found at each verse a literal rendering from the Rabbinic Hebrew of Mendelssohn's commentary, which will at once be recognized by the accompanying inverted commas and the addition of his name. Its occasional deviations from strictly elegant English, arising from close resemblance to the original, will, I hope, be atoned for by its being thereby rendered more serviceable to the student of Rabbinic Hebrew, whose advantage is peculiarly contemplated in the following work.

The utility and convenience of the arrangement to which I have alluded will doubtless approve itself to the scholar, and perhaps suggest to others who may possess higher qualifications and greater leisure than myself to edit on a similar plan other parts of the Hebrew Scriptures which require more than ordinary illustration. Such a work would ensure to all readers of the Bible the removal of many obscurities and paradoxes which it now presents to them, the discovery of fresh elucidations and parallelisms, together with a higher appreciation of its classical elegance as well as its majestic sublimity, and to those who have made themselves acquainted with its original language a supply of comprehensive and valuable objects for the application of that knowledge which would render it increasingly valuable. It might appear at first sight that an English version of Ecclesiastes renders unnecessary a Latin one which corresponds with it in sense so closely as mine; but I think it will be found that in many obscure and controverted passages the double version exhibits the sense which I have finally determined to attach to them much more definitely and explicitly than a single one in either language could

do. As instances of this, I would particularly direct attention to chap. iii. from verse 19 to 22 inclusive, and chap. ix. from verse 1 to 13 inclusive, which in the Latin translation I have turned into the obliqua oratio, a form of speech in which the English like the Hebrew language is very defective, but which in those places ought to be introduced, in order that the intention of the author may be fairly represented, and that it may be borne in mind in reading them that they express not his own opinions, but the inferences which would necessarily follow from an imperfect view of the Divine government. In other places also, particularly in the 12th chapter, ambiguities unavoidable in the English version are obviated in the other by the greater precision of the Latin tenses and adverbs.

With regard to the division into Sections, and the introductory analyses of my English Translation, I would refer the reader to some remarks at the end of the Prolegomena at pages 93 and 94.

Wherever the Masoretic various readings indicated by the words קרי and כתיב occur, a statement to that effect is made in the Notes to the text.

The editions which I have used in translating Mendlessohn's commentary and the בואר המלות, (from which I have extracted various grammatical observations embodied with the Notes) are that printed at Berlin, and dated 1833, or in Jewish figures, ת"ק"צ"ד "לאלף הוששי", and that printed at Ofenbach, and dated ק"ט "ט"ס"ק"ה, i.e. 1808.

It now remains for me to say a few words as to the course which I have pursued in the Prolegomena of the following work.

In the first part of it, it has been my principal object to correct certain errors arising from mistranslation or misapplication of passages of Ecclesiastes into which several writers of eminence have fallen with respect to it. Accordingly I have had occasion to notice a chapter of the "Morch Nevochim," or "Guide of the Perplexed," in which Maimonides quotes it in proof of the future eternal duration of the world, a doctrine seemingly at variance with our belief as Christians; and I have endeavoured to shew that it is quite possible to reconcile with the prophetic revelations of the New Testament the verses (Eccles. i. 4, and iii. 14) as well as others which he adduces, without departing from that method of rigorously literal interpretation which he applies to them and to which like most Rabbinic writers he attaches paramount importance. It is solely therefore for the purpose of exhibiting this possibility and so, in a manner, refuting Maimonides on his own ground, that I have suggested a theory of explanation for those passages, the novelty of which makes it require some apology. At first sight it may appear fanciful or chimerical; and the more so to some readers, because it is based on the most literal interpretation of the prophecies wherein the restoration of the Jews to the land of Palestine, and the eternity of the Divine favour to them as a nation, seems to be predicted. But, though I am far from adopting it as an article of my creed, I am inclined to think that on closer examination it will be allowed to be at least as reasonable as any definite speculations concerning the visible and material circumstances of "the consummation of all things" can be. The truth of it indeed is necessarily uncertain in the same degree with that of the method on which it is founded; and my

reason therefore for proposing it is not that I hold it to be essentially correct, but merely because it seems to me a sufficiently successful attempt at what I had in view, the establishment of a theoretic agreement between the passages in question by means of that very system of literal interpretation which, if differently applied, as it has been by Maimonides, might lead to the opposite result.

In the latter part of the Prolegomena, along with a sketch of the life of the great Commentator to whom I am principally indebted, I have quoted considerable extracts from his controversial writings which contain the developement of certain opinions with regard to the ancient Jewish polity which may be new and therefore startling to some readers. I wish therefore to state distinctly, that I am neither prepared nor desirous to maintain the truthfulness of these opinions, nor indeed to enlist myself on either side in the controversy connected with them. My only object in introducing these extracts is to give the reader an opportunity of deciding on the justice of an insinuation which has been made, that Mendlessohn was an apostate from the faith of his forefathers. I am anxious that the Biblical annotations of one whom I consider a most successful Commentator, should be received with a prejudice rather in their favour than against them, and imagine that this cannot be more effectually accomplished than by presenting to the reader the very passages which alone can have given rise to the suspicion I allude to, in order that he may perceive that the discussions which they contain are perfectly guiltless of impugning the Divine origin of the Jewish polity, and that he may be convinced by their general tenor, that Mendlessohn's reverence for the religious creed of his ances-

tors and the inspiration of the Scriptures is unimpeachable. For these then, as well as for many other portions of the following work, I crave his indulgence; and venture to commend it to his notice, in the hope that it may not prove an altogether unprofitable contribution to Biblical literature.

TRINITY COLLEGE, Feb. 1, 1845.

ERRATA.

PAGE	LINE	FOR	READ
8	20	" we are"	" I am."
12	last	"his"	"its."
26	last	" resort"	" recourse."
29	2	"uncontrovertibly"	"incontrovertibly."
33	9	" בְּדָבֵר "	" בְּדָבֵר "
65	last but two	" הַשְׁמָה "	" הַשְׁמָה "
66	2	"titles"	"titles."
96	4	" כָּלֹל "	" כָּלֹל "
111	1	"he eat"	"he should eat."
137	3	" סְבִבָּ "	" סְבִבָּ "
148	6	"cognitonem"	"cognitionem."
159	3	" oinne"	" omni."
164	11. 19	"esset"	"sit."
167	2	"laboraverit"	"laboravit,"
180	16	" אֶת "	" אֶת "
183	3	"meros"	"meras."
184	2	"obnoxios"	"obnoxias."
223	6	"hoc"	"hæc."
270	last	" וְרָאָה "	" וְרָאָה "
275	19	" פְּתִינָם "	" פְּתִינָם "
281	last but one	" אֲפָר "	" אֲפָר "
291	10	"eque"	"atque e."
295	last	"Num. xviii."	"Num. xxiii."
295	ix. 12	"fatali"	"exitiali."
335	2	"tremebunt"	"trement."

ADDENDUM.

At page 317, after line 8.

"It would have been more usual, agreeably with the above rendering, that the participle עֲשִׂים should have been in construction with לְחַם, and become עֲשִׂי ; but instances of this kind are found elsewhere, as in Jon. ii. 9, מְשֻׁמְרִים הַבְּלִי שְׂאָוְכָו 'Those who regard lying vanities, &c.' where מְשֻׁמְרִי would have been more usual. Besides עֲשִׂים refers not only to לְחַם, but also to יְמִין and בְּסִף."

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PROLEGOMENA,

OR,

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

VIEWED through the medium of the translations commonly in use throughout Europe, the portion of the Bible which forms the subject of the following pages had long presented an aspect singularly perplexing. To general defects of arrangement, connectedness, and perspicuity there seemed added in particular passages an unqualified permission to thoughtless enjoyment of present good on the ground of the utter uncertainty of the future. And it is probable that a similar misconception of the meaning of its inspired author, combined with the record of his frailties and the silence as to his penitence in the annals of the Kings, gave rise to the melancholy legend which Oriental mythology has attached to his name. The attempt had indeed been made to account for the occurrence of the passages alluded to by representing them as ironical. With respect however to that at the end of the third and beginning of the fourth chapters this method is clearly inapplicable; and in the rest it would compel us to recognize an undistinguishable mixture of ironical permission with serious exhortation little in accordance with that correctness of writing (כְתַב יִשְׁרָאֵל) which Solomon tells us he had sought to attain, and which shines conspicuously in his earlier writings. His discourses in the book of Proverbs, addressed like this book to mankind in general, consist entirely of grave reproof, earnest warning, or persuasive and encouraging counsel,

*

a gentler treatment of moral malady than the caustic of irony, whereby its symptoms might be aggravated rather than mitigated, confirmed rather than eradicated. It was therefore most important that the author of Ecclesiastes should be satisfactorily vindicated from the charge implied by those translations of having written obscurely or inconsistently, and the compilers of the Sacred Canon from that of having inserted therein a book unequal with the rest in style and irreconcileable with them in doctrine. This vindication, though undertaken by many an able commentator during successive centuries, had been very inadequately performed, and might till now have remained imperfect, had the ingenuity of Mendlessohn been less happily directed or less equal to his task. It remained for him to bring to light the true order and connexion of the portions of this book, the conclusiveness of its arguments, and the excellence of its doctrines; and to demonstrate that its author, after testing through a life of prosperity the vanity of all earthly enjoyments, discovered at last true happiness to consist in cheerful contentment and in acting conformably to the inevitable doctrine of a future judgment. The learning which this great writer brought to bear upon the subject is regarded by his own nation as almost unrivalled among themselves; and, as he tells us, he has not trusted to his own resources alone in his edition of this "roll," but, at the same time that he has not neglected to consult the commentators "not of the seed of Israel," has introduced all he deemed valuable in the annotations upon it of the distinguished Rabbins of an earlier age, especially Yarchi and Aben Ezra. A translation of his commentary will therefore exhibit specimens of the writings of those laborious expositors on a subject which, as unconnected with the explanation of prophecy, they are most likely to have illustrated without prejudice, and will tend, I think, to convince the reader that in some at least of their commentaries they merit our praise and gratitude for their ingenuity and research, rather than our indiscriminate or un-

qualified censure for defects fairly attributable to their national and educational circumstances.

It is surprising that Mendlessohn's discoveries (for they deserve no less an appellation) with respect to this book should not hitherto have been made more accessible to the English public than they are in the language in which they were originally developed. A translation of his commentary into German appears to have been published about seventy years ago, which is noticed by Rosenmuller in the Elenchus Interpretum prefixed to his Annotations on Ecclesiastes; but at the time when he wrote his Scholia it had probably become already so scarce that he had not the opportunity of consulting it. Otherwise it seems unaccountable that he, who has availed himself of assistance and suggestions from every quarter, Jewish, Patristic, and modern, for the elucidation of the Biblical text, has neglected even to allude to explanations which, for their critical ability and the consistent sense they for the first time exhibit of passages which others have left in hopeless obscurity, are almost unequalled.

A chief excellence of Mendlessohn's commentary consists in his invariable attention to the accents and careful adaptation of his explanations to them. Some of his most important corrections of the translation of difficult passages are based entirely on the interpretation of these marks, which have been doubtless transmitted from the earliest times for the purpose of perpetuating the correct understanding of the sacred text. The judgment of all the literary authorities among the Jews, with the exception of a single grammarian, is in favour of their extreme antiquity, and it is to them that all authentic information on the subject is exclusively confined. I need only refer the reader to the most learned and elaborate work of that profound Hebraist, the younger Buxtorf, "On the Hebrew vowel-points and accents," to convince him of the striking concurrence of Rabbinic writers from the age of the Zohar to more modern times in the opinion

that they were invented by Ezra and his colleagues when the use of Biblical Hebrew as a vernacular language began to decline¹; an opinion by which they are referred to an æra nearly a thousand years prior to that to which their introduction is attributed by Elias Levita, and their concurrence in which cannot be justly attributed to prejudice or partiality, since the copies of the Hebrew Scriptures esteemed by the Jews most sacred and as such used in their synagogues have been always without points. And so convinced was Buxtorf of the great importance of the question, that he devoted his whole energies to its investigation, and has done all that the most elaborate examination and careful discussion of authorities could effect in order to decide it finally in favour of that opinion, which he has shewn to be held by the Rabbins almost without a dissentient voice. The author of a dissertation on the book of Jonah

¹ At the end of a chapter, in which he quotes and examines with consummate learning and ability the observations of ancient authors on this subject, he says at page 316: “Sic plerorumque Hebræorum est sententia, Punctorum Vocalium et Accentuum figuræ Esræ tempore vel natas esse, vel renatas; et hunc in finem ab eo vel inventas, vel renovatas et in usum revocatas, ut Sacrosanctum Dei Verbum in posterum, deficientibus Prophetis et invalescentibus populi Judaici calamitatibus, hoc medio tanto purius et integrius ab omni corruptione conservari, ac tanto majore cum facilitate et voluptate a quibusvis legi posset.” And at page 325, after noticing the high qualifications of the Rabbins who were thus unanimous, and their consequent claim to speak with decision, he thus compares the weight of their testimony with that of Elias Levita: “Hi omnes” (sc. R. Saad Gaon, R. Solomon, R. Aben Ezra, R. Kimchi, &c.) “sane ita sunt comparati, ut nullus illorum sit qui non multis modis Eliam superet, et longe post se relinquat. Hi enim plerique non solum Grammatici sed etiam aliis artibus ac scientiis abundantissime instructi fuere, ut nesciam qua ratione Elias, nudus et merus Grammaticus, illis præferri debeat. Minimus horum digitus crassior est lumbis Eliæ, imo unguis digitorum ipsorum præstantior illius ventre; si in stateram cum ipsis ascendat, vanitate et nihilo ipso levior deprehendetur bonus alioquin Elias.”

published along with a new version of it towards the conclusion of the last century, can hardly have been aware of the overwhelming amount of testimony he is setting at nought when he states as if it had never been called in question the very account of this matter which Buxtorf had taken such pains to disprove, viz. that the points were not invented or introduced into the text till the Gemara had been completed and the Masora had ended, i. e. during the fifth century of the Christian æra. This statement moreover he has not taken the trouble to distinguish from certain very imperfectly translated sentences out of the Preface to the *Yad Hachazakah* or *Mishnah Torah*, among which he has placed it, thereby giving an incautious reader the false impression that it rests on the authority of Maimonides, and so implying a reflection on the accuracy or candour of Buxtorf, who, if such a passage had existed, ought to have noticed it and fairly discussed it as a most important feature in the controversy. Such misrepresentation, whether intentional or accidental, deserves the severest censure, as tending to a depreciation of the value of the Hebrew Text of the Scriptures; for if it be once conceded that so important a portion of it as the vowel-points and accents was interpolated at a later period, when the Hebrew had become a dead language, and the spirit of inspiration had long ceased from among men, it is impossible that in so far as it is affected by such interpolation it should continue to be regarded with unqualified reverence or unsuspecting confidence. Mendlessohn's opinion is sufficiently indicated by his constant appeal to the accents as a guide to interpretation, and the decided manner in which he recognizes them as a component part of the text, of the faithfulness of the transmission of which there was no reasonable doubt.

The Rabbinic Hebrew in which he has written his commentaries is concise in the highest degree; but in his hands it is unusually elegant as well as devoid of that extraneous admixture of words from other languages which often obscures

the works of Raschi. His style moreover is grave, perspicuous, and cogent in argument, and when he appears to have put forth his energies for the establishment of a particular system of translation he is almost unanswerable. These excellencies render that work of his which I have translated, as well as his elaborate commentary on the Pentateuch, deserving of the attentive study of the Hebrew Scholar.

With regard to the scope and object of the book of Ecclesiastes, Mendelssohn has shewn in the course of his commentary, that while two principal topics treated of in it are the evidences of the immortality of the soul, and the duty of cheerfulness in this life and a contented enjoyment of it, along with a recollection of duties to God who will bring us to account, the discussion of these topics is interspersed with various recommendations, religious, political, and domestic, which come under no general denomination. An attempt, however, has been made by a modern author to demonstrate that the book has one single object, viz. the discovery of the chief good, (an idea suggested by Doederlein). His intention is excellent; but the method he has chosen of carrying it into effect objectionable, if not dangerous. He has followed the example of another writer of undoubted ability, in encumbering and diluting the sacred text with an interpolatory commentary, and consequently has run the risk of mingling the results of an erroneous impression with the very words of divine truth, and so distorting them to a purpose remote from their real intention; and in fact he has been far from establishing his position even by the method in question; a method clearly improper in dealing with any book of classical authority, and much more with that of inspiration. While those remains of antiquity which the preference of subsequent ages has perpetuated through the wreck of time are ever regarded as exemplars too perfect to be interlarded with extraneous and intrusive illustration, the fine gold of canonical Scripture has

been rashly alloyed with the dross of human commentary. Whatever be the character of the published interpretations of the sacred text, so long as they are kept distinct from it, the worst they can do is to misrepresent its meaning, while it remains its own witness, and speaks for itself; but as soon as they are inserted between its words and sentences, truth may be so distorted as to be no longer recognised, and error imperceptibly obtain a sanction by means of the very boldness of its intrusion.

An a priori objection to the theory of the above-mentioned author is, that it would seem to involve the hypothesis that the book itself is falsely attributed to the author of it; and that it really belongs to a later age, when the speculations of Greek philosophers had already found their way, and were esteemed, among the Jews. (These speculations, in a great measure, occasioned the formation of the controversial sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees.) Such a theory, if established, might be added to the catalogue of objections which have been made by Eichorn and Doederlein, to the opinion that Solomon was the author of this book, of which Dathe pronounces that they are unanswerable. He says, “*Non Salomonem, sed senioris, ætatis scriptorem hujus libri auctorem esse, post Grotium, qui id ipsum jam viderat, argumentis tam gravibus probarunt Eichornius in Introduct. in Vet. Test. Part III. p. 561; et Doederleinus passim, ut non nisi morosior traditionum antiquarum defensor illud sit negaturus.*” With the opinion of Dathe here expressed I cannot at all agree. Several of the alleged arguments, as I shall shew, are removed by a more correct translation; and others may be applied equally well to prove the contrary hypothesis, viz. that the book is written by Solomon. Let it not be supposed, however, that the opinion mentioned above indicates any scepticism on the part of Dathe or his authorities, as to the canonical authority of the book: it merely expresses un-

certainty to which of the kings of Israel, after David, it is to be attributed; and whether it should not be classed along with the books of Joshua, Judges, and Job, whose authors are unknown, although they be unquestionably canonical. As to the arguments in question, it has been said that, in Chap. iv. 45, allusion is made to the king's successor, and his inability to govern the people; and that if Solomon had been this king, he would have taken measures to prevent his accession to the throne. Now it will be shewn, at the place, in the commentary, that this reasoning is perfectly false. The reference made is clearly only to the popularity of Jeroboam, who was a slave of Solomon's, and drew away the people after him, so that it seemed very likely that, if he did not supplant Solomon on the throne, he might at least succeed him; and Rehoboam is really not alluded to at all. Thus this passage is altogether a strong presumptive evidence on the other side. Again, the passage, "I was king over Israel in Jerusalem," which has been employed as an objection, is the strongest of all arguments in favour of Solomon's having been the author. Besides that the author had already stated himself to be the son of David, we know that David held his court both at Hebron and Jerusalem, whereas Solomon reigned only at Jerusalem, so that this "king" cannot have been David; and after him those who "reigned at Jerusalem" were not kings of Israel, but of Judah, as they are always styled in the Jewish histories of the kings. In fact, Solomon was the only "king over Israel in Jerusalem," and this may be called an undesigned evidence. It has been objected by Jahn that it was "idle to state a fact so universally known;" but, as will be shewn in the commentary, his reason for so doing was to point out that he had greater opportunities than fell to the lot of men in general for pursuing his philosophic investigations. And so, where he says, "I was richer than all in Jerusalem before me," this was not an idle boast, but his

design is to shew that he had ample means for pursuing worldly pleasure, as well as philosophy, to its full extent, and had nevertheless discovered its emptiness and vanity. Again, who was so qualified by his own experience to pronounce "that the making of many books is an endless thing, and much useless study a mere weariness of the flesh"? And, besides, his sweeping condemnation of the female sex, along with the number of 1000, as used in the same passage, are in perfect accordance with what we might have expected from the known life and history of that monarch. As to the difference of style between this and his other transmitted works, this may be fully accounted for by the different nature of the subjects. The Proverbs consists of detached maxims, and the Song of Songs is a series of amatory idyls, replete with mystic meaning, while this book is a treatise, written in the manner of open discussion, on political and moral philosophy. The non-occurrence of the name of Jehovah is a perfectly futile argument, as this is also observable of the Song of Songs, and other books of the Bible. Again, it has been objected that the Talmud affirms that Isaiah wrote his own book, Proverbs, Canticles, and Ecclesiastes; and again, that Ezekiel wrote Isaiah, and these three. But these two passages explain one another, and shew that all that can be meant by the word **בְּנֵי** *wrote* in these expressions, is either that they "copied and disseminated" these books, or that they "inserted them into the canon of scripture;" for Isaiah and Ezekiel cannot both have been the authors of the book which bears the name of the former. Finally, Eichorn quotes a number of words in this book, which he pronounces to be foreign, and not pure Hebrew. But the Chaldee, Arabic, and Hebrew, having all emanated from the same source, it is manifestly impossible to pronounce with certainty, on a word occurring in so confessedly an ancient book as Ecclesiastes, that it belongs to either of the two former and not to the latter,

because the further we trace these dialects back, the greater will be their similarity: and even supposing some of the words he mentions to be foreign and Aramaic, (several of them are found in the Pentateuch, and are therefore cited erroneously,) Solomon may easily have acquired them through his constant intercourse with the neighbouring nations, or from his foreign wives, especially as this book was written late in life; for he quotes the murmuring people as speaking of himself as an old and foolish king, and comparing him with Jeroboam, to the advantage of the latter. But far more difficult to dispose of than the above objections, would be that which might be derived from the fact of this book being a disquisition on the "summum bonum," could that be established. It might then be argued with much plausibility, not only that this book is not written by him to whom it is commonly ascribed, but that it is not genuine at all, nor written by a king of Israel, but inserted into the canon at some later period, when the Pharisees and Sadducees had already derived many of their opinions from the Greek philosophers.

We are glad to find that the opinion of the learned and pious Luther, respecting the scope and object of this book, coincides with that of Mendelssohn, except that he takes it to be more limited than perhaps it really is, and does not appear to have noticed how much of it is devoted to a proof of the immortality of the soul, and a future judgment. He pronounces its scope and object to be "the recommendation of the cheerful enjoyment of the good things of this life, along with the performance of known duty." We find in this, as well as in all his comments on Scripture, various allusions to the abuses of the church of Rome, as might be expected in one whose mind was necessarily so much engrossed with that subject. He speaks as follows, in the preface to his Latin commentary on this book: "Not only is this book one of the most difficult in the whole Bible, so that no one has yet fully ascertained

" its meaning, but it has been so distorted by the glosses of
" many unworthy commentators, that it has become almost a
" work of greater labour and importance to clear and vindicate
" the author from the dreamy fancies with which they have
" encumbered him, than to point out his true meaning. There
" are two reasons which make this book more obscure than
" others; one, that they did not perceive the scope and design
" of the author, which, as it is important to bear in mind and
" follow in every sort of composition, so especially is it so here;
" another, their ignorance of Hebrew, and a singularity of phrase
" on the part of the author himself, which is frequently at
" variance with the common use of Hebrew, and exceedingly
" remote from our present mode of expression. The consequence
" has been, that this book, worthy on many accounts to be con-
" stantly in the hands of all, and especially to be much studied
" by persons in high authority, (as a book in which, more than
" in any other part of Scripture, the administration of human
" affairs, both public and private, is graphically treated of) has
" been hitherto miserably neglected and degraded, so that at
" this day we do not derive from it the use or profit which
" we ought to have done. So much mischief has the temerity
" or ignorance of commentators occasioned. Our first business
" then is to ascertain and make ourselves masters of the scope
" of the book, and its object and design; for unless these are
" settled, it will be impossible to understand the style and phrase.
" The main object then of this book is, that Solomon wishes to
" render us calm and cheerful in the common affairs and acci-
" dents of this life, and to teach us to enjoy present things
" contentedly, without care or eager desire about future things
" (as St Paul says, 'I would have you without carefulness,'
" 'sine cura et solicitudine agentes'); for that anxiety about
" future things annoys to no purpose; but Solomon infers, by
" a sort of perpetual induction from the vanity and fruitlessness
" of particular pursuits and efforts of individuals, a general con-

" clusion that all the occupations of men are vain. For he
" says that 'the race is not to the swift, nor sustenance to the
" wise, nor the battle to the powerful; and that the more wise,
" holy, and diligent a man becomes, the less he does; and his
" wisdom, justice, and diligence, become useless.' If these
" things then be of no avail, all things must necessarily be
" vain and fruitless. But here we must first remove the
" erroneous and injurious opinion of many, in thinking that the
" author recommends the contempt of God's creatures, which
" the tenor of Scripture is far from intending to be despised
" or condemned as injurious. For all things which God has made
" are very good, and made for the use of man, as St Paul
" distinctly states in 1 Tim. iv. 4 : 'Every creature of God is
" good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanks-
" giving, and it be sanctified by the word of God and prayer.'
" Consequently it is foolishly and impiously that many preachers
" inveigh against glory, power, dignity, wealth, gold, honour,
" beauty, women, expressly condemning God's creatures. Power
" is a divine ordinance, gold and wealth are given by God.
" Woman is a blessing intended as a help-mate for man.
" God has made them all to be good and adapted to some
" use of man. What is condemned therefore in this book is,
" not the creatures of God, but the depraved passions and
" desires of man, who are not content with the creatures of
" God presented to their use, but are always anxious to ac-
" cumulate wealth, riches, honour, and glory, as if they were
" to live here for ever, spurning at the same time present
" good, and always pursuing one thing after another. For this
" is the height of vanity and wretchedness, to deprive oneself
" of the use of the good things we possess, and to be use-
" lessly anxious about securing future good. These evil lusts,
" I say, and not the creatures themselves, are what Solomon
" here condemns. For as to the use of the creature, he says
" himself, that there is nothing better than to be cheerful and

“ enjoy one’s life, and eat, and drink, and delight in one’s employment; where he would be contradicting himself, if he also condemned the things themselves, and not rather the abuse of them, which consists only in human passions. Some foolish persons, not understanding these things, have absurdly taught contempt and flight from the world, and have done many absurd things themselves, as we read in the lives of the fathers, that there were some who even shut themselves up from ever seeing the sun, *reminding us of the passage where Solomon condemns him who eats all his days in the dark,* (well they deserved to have their eyes put out) and for the sake of religion lived in the most sordid plight. Whereas living above the world is not living out of it. Nor does he despise money who altogether rejects it, like the Franciscans, but he who lives in the midst of the world, and is not carried away by the passions and lusts we have mentioned. This is the first thing to be remembered by the readers of Ecclesiastes. Another thing to be carefully borne in mind is, that in this book Solomon speaks simply of the ordinary affairs of life, of the pursuits, and desires, and plans of men. Let us not then fancy, with the interpreters, that he intends to condemn natural Philosophy and even Astro-nomy as vain and useless speculations; whereas these sciences have great and many advantages which are constantly presenting themselves to us. Besides, enquiry into the nature of things is not only useful, but very delightful. The subject matter then of this book is simply ‘the human race,’ which is so foolish, that it seeks and aims at many things which it cannot attain to; or, if it does attain to them, does not enjoy them, but has great pain and distress in the possession of them; a fault not of the things themselves, but of their foolish passions. If men gain affluence they are soon disgusted with it; if not, they are insatiably and restlessly desirous of it. So Ovid says:

“Quod licet ingratum est, quod non licet acrius urit;

“Quod sequitur fugio, quod fugit ipse sequor.

“Nemo sorte suâ contentus vivit; et intra

“Fortunam didicit nemo manere suam.”

“Such is the vanity of the human heart, that it is never content with the present gifts of God, but, neglecting them, always seeks one thing after another, and never rests till it attain its desires, and then despises them, and looks after other objects still. To return then; it is the design of this book to teach us to use with thankfulness those creatures of God, which we have in our present possession, which are bountifully given to us and bestowed upon us by the blessing of God, without anxiety about future temporal blessings; only to have a quiet and tranquil heart, and a mind full of cheerfulness and contentment with the will of God, as Christ says, ‘Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.’ Well saith Augustine, ‘Jussisti Domine supplicium esse homini non contento suis irrequietum animum’.”

The learned Huet and others have asserted that Luther spoke disparagingly of the book of Ecclesiastes; but the fact is, that the remarks in his Table Talk, which led them to say so, are not with respect to this book, but to that of Jesus the son of Sirach; indeed, the passage quoted above is sufficient refutation of the assertion. Luther clearly alludes, in this passage, to a eulogy based by St Jerome on this book of monastic or rather ascetic life, wherein he infers from Solomon's demonstrating the vanity of all human labour, and the false notions with which men pursue happiness, that it is the path of duty and wisdom to fly from the world and live in desert seclusion. A better refutation of this notion could not be furnished than Luther's preface.

Jerome is not at all singular in having attempted to derive unscriptural doctrines from the book of Ecclesiastes. Some have cited it in defence of Epicurean opinions, and others have taken offence at his reflections on the fruitlessness of

scientific investigation. The Rabbins themselves are recorded in the Talmud to have had great difficulty in reconciling this book with the precepts of the law, and in explaining away its apparent inconsistencies. Beside the reason assigned in the celebrated passage so fully discussed by Mendlessohn and others for their wishing to secrete this book, we find an additional one in the Medrasch Coheleth, fol. 114 a. 82 b. שׁמְצָאָו בּוּ דְבָרִים שְׁנוּתִים לֹאַד מִנּוֹת words inclining to heresy," i.e. atheism. Such sentences as these, coming to them with authority only second to that of Scripture itself, the more recent Jewish writers have made the greatest exertions to palliate and elude. As an instance of this I think it worth while to quote the preface to Coheleth of Rabbi Isaac Aramah, (who, A.D. 1492, published the "Five Rolls" with Yarchi's Commentary, and his own), because it is a curious specimen of the old Rabbinic style, and furnishes a more than ordinarily ingenious explanation of the remarkable Talmudic passage to which I have alluded. It is this.

ואני בעני' ב'גנותי נספרים ונחנוני' המספרים ספר קהילת
שליחונים וכהןרונים ומאנטיס מתקלאים אל' חלוקיס : יס' מפרשים
חוותו צפטעים וליס ווילוקיס. יס' גדרני' טכמא טאס נסתרים ועמוקיס.
יס' ע"ז דרכו זו סוקיס ומפטיעיס נלייקיס : פ' פ'וה טאס נתן
סכלס נתקאיס לאונות לה טעהו גדרני' מתוקי', ולו' חדך דאס נתן
זו טעם לאבב צטעים מספיקיס מען סכלע נולין מהכל ברייה ומען
ילו' ממתקיס. ולו' עוד הלו' סמננו ובמרו' סותתיקיס. בקשו' חכמים
לגנו' ספר קהילת הלו' שמאלו' תחלתו וטפו' לחרות טהורות ודנרים
מווקקיס ומכל צינ' מנוקיס : רלה' וס' ונהפל' ובדבריס עתי'קיס
וכל' זה חייננו טס' למספר כהה' קמי'ום צפתם דנרו' הלו' יס' חדך זו
עליו עדות "ןומען" כי' הפקים מכל' חדך סי' לפנוי ולו' קרו' עס
'פסו' חיותו ללבניר' הרועיס' נuis' זmirot' ישרחן' ועל' ממסלת רום מלכות
'ירושס' עיר' פקידס'. ונס' מעה' שריה' לנוט' חדך זו' יקורי' סחו'

“Quod licet ingratum est, quod non licet acrius urit;

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סראטוניים ובהרמוניים ומאנטוניים מתקלקיים כל חלוקות : ים מפרשים
חוותו נפטטים וליס ותקוקיס. ים גדרני חכמה טהש נסתרים ועמוקיס.
ים ע"ז דרכו צו חוקיס ומפטטים לדייקיס : פנד פאזה טהש
סכלס נתקakis נפנות חת טעהו גדרני מתוקן, וכן יהוד נאס נתן
צוו טעם לאבם נטעמים מספיקיס מן סכלע נולין מוחלט גדריה ומען
יען מעתקakis. וכן עוד היה סכמו ונמרו הוותיקיס. נקדו חכמים
גננו ספר קסת היה טמאנין תפלתו וספפו חזרות טהורות ודנרים
מוחוקיס ומכל טיג מנקיס : רלה זס זר ונפלו ובדנרים עתיקיס
וכל זה חייננו טוה למספר כוה סמיום נפתח דנריו לה'יס יהוד צו
עליו עדות "נהמך" כי הפקיס מכל חסר שי לפכו ולחריו עס
ישפו יהו לגדיר פרועיס נuis זמירות ישרחן ועל ממסלת רהס מלכות
ירושלם עיר הקדש. ונס מהה שרלה גנוסי אשר צו יפקור סחו

העליזונים פעלין סבויוניים ווואר פניו אלפני פגוד שתוכנויות כל זה מהי'כ סיודר נתקנית ככוון בטהנת הסודן דבריו מן סתירה וככל שמתהר וגערת השמירה והווארות בקשרן שלקוי ובסבנת קנותיו וירור גורתיו וכוונתו כי המכש עניין גראטן לפרש ולען מעתס וטענת כל סוגן וטענן למתחס ולמחוס : זאת היהת לי רוכ ימי סנה רמה וענומה סנהי מדתני ביתו הפטהן צולפיים חמשה . וכמה פעמים צהתי שעריו ועהתינו גן גועל וחירות טרנה מלךנו ברכותה המכונול : אך הפעס הודה את " " כי טה חזון לי דפקתי ומלהת פתח פתום צין לוּט נצח כמלל כף נחת רוח . דפקתי ונכמתה טה נטה ונודינה לפני דרך קרוונה ופסוטה ווס נקלה סי' נלכט נא חמיכים ווועדים . מלהת כהוּא צלל רג לי ולמקנדים חמומי דעתן ובינא חד חדין לאס נדיעס לדגב על פרי הפטמה ולקפץ על גבעות הטעונה . כי רלהתיה ערוכה בכל עניינים וטעמים וטמור' מכל חלו הגדוניות ונס כן כי בכל דרכיס דרכי נועס עזוזת הקטן עליה נכתף ישן חדן גל נכתבו ריק ליראת רחים הס ליכתב : ועל פי דרכנו למדנו נחות ומלחת ח"ז כי אל מפי קושי מליות דעתנו כתוב נלט המשיגנים בקשר לנו רק ליראת ספמוני אל זו או קושי מלהנדים טונה כל תורה חמיהנדים לקל עלי' סקירת העיון ווס מגאנדים תוחנה מפטמי סכתויס הרכח' לא' צהילוי' וכרכג יעטוי' . ווה חמר טלי גנווה כוון טמלו תחלתו וסועו חדר הס פמקומוי' חדר ידי' עס הרכח' ממעסית נאס ירתת טמיס' . חמנס הרכח' סיס חדר נטסוקת תלמוד יסתו חדריו' . וכרכג סיידעה ינחו חדריו' . אין פקדתס היליחס . כי סמוך לאס נאס' עירו יושדרו חדר סהאג' עד שתחפוץ לנד מחד נגה לאס מראתו וסועו למזוין דרכי חפץ מכלו .

The translation of which is as follows :

" I, in my humility, have considered the writings and compositions of those who have commented on the book of Ecclesiastes, both the more ancient and those of later date, and have found that they divide themselves into several classes; some have explained it by strange and far-fetched primary interpretations; and some by deep and subtle scientific disqui-

“ sitions; and some by the method of recondito interpretation
“ have drawn from it just and right doctrines; but the phase
“ of resemblance between them is, that they have all been
“ forced to alter its sense with glossing expressions, and not
“ one of them has given us reason by any sufficient causes
“ which he alleges, to give it any higher praise than that
“ of ‘a rock which produces wholesome food;’ or ‘a strong
“ lion from whence cometh forth sweetness,’” (i. e. something
very unpromising, but yet from which good may be ob-
tained by searching for it.) “ And not only so, but these
“ pious men have, as it were, put it to the vote and set-
“ tled, that ‘the sages sought to hide the book of Ecclesiastes;
“ but that when they found its beginning and end to be pure
“ expressions and tried words and free from all blemish, *they*
“ *allowed it to remain.*’ Now this is strange and wonder-
“ ful, and a thing hard to understand, and all this is in-
“ consistent with a book like this, attributed in the opening
“ of it to a man respecting whom came the sure testimony
“ of Jchovah, that he was wiser than all who came before
“ and after him, even if his father should be compared with
“ him, the mightiest of shepherds, the sweet psalmist of Israel,
“ and who was over the government of the head of king-
“ doms, Jerusalem the holy city. And besides, from what is
“ seen to be the subject which is investigated in it, that it
“ is the sublimest of all contemplations, and that it holds a
“ place above the highest in perfection of wisdom, it was be-
“ fitting and consistent that it should be arranged in perfec-
“ tion of order, with an excessive degree of caution in its
“ expressions against obscurity and repetition and superfluity,
“ and with strong watchfulness and attention to the connexion
“ of its parts and the agreement of its portions and the per-
“ spicuity of its sections and subjects; for the wise man’s eyes
“ are in his head, to explain and not to conceal, and at the
“ same time to refute and silence the arguments of every

"adversary and objector. For a long time this was a strong
"and powerful motive with me *to give up the research*; I
"turned back as it were many miles from the doors of its
"house; and many times have I approached its gates and
"found it a closed garden and feared very much to take
"hold of the handle of the bar. But now I will praise tho
"Lord, for he hath inclined his ear to me; I have sought
"and have found an aperture, as it were, opened to me be-
"tween board and board, to supply me with refreshing encou-
"ragement," (this refers to a method of interpretation which
he afterwards describes); "I have pressed in and have entered
"line by line; and a ready and clear way presented itself be-
"fore me, and one which, though it may be easy to walk in
"for the wise and learned, I have found as one that findeth
"great spoil for myself and those who like me are little in know-
"ledge and skill, nor possess ability (literally 'legs') to leap on
"the mountains of wisdom and bound on the hills of intelli-
"gence. For I have observed it to extend to every topic and
"meaning of the book, and to be free from all ambiguities,
"and moreover that in all its paths there are ways of pleasant-
"ness, by means of which the service of the Most Holy may be
"borne as an easy yoke upon the neck, and that consequently,
"though not described in writing, it well deserves to have
"been so. By means of it I have been led to perceive the
"real sagacity and elegance of *that saying of* our sages of
"blessed memory; and that it was not on account of the
"difficulty of discovering the real excellence of the book with
"reflecting persons that they sought to hide it, but for fear
"of the multitude and people in general, who waste the
"treasures of the law, and refusing to receive the yoke of
"vigorous thought are content to seek profit from primary
"interpretations of Scripture which are regarded by the Lord
"as utterly unprofitable;" (literally "like dense thickets." In
explaining Scripture the Rabbins often discarded its primary

"sense), and on this account he says that they did not hide "it, viz. because they found with respect to the beginning "and end of it, which are the parts of a book handled by the "fingers of common people, that in theso, I say, the fear of "God *was inculcated*. Indeed, those men in whom is the "desire of learning will seek after it; and by earnestly pur- "suing knowledge will at length arrive at her chambers. "There is nothing to be apprehended from them; for their "heart is established within them; and they will constantly "incite and spur on their own desire of knowledge, until it will "be eager, only from what is revealed to them at the begin- "ning and end, to draw profit from the whole of it."

Thus Aramah explains what is said in the Talmud, that "the Rabbins allowed the book of Ecclesiastes to remain in the Canon, because the beginning and end of it were found to be in accordance with the law," in this way; that they did not mean to say, that the middle portions of the book were inconsistent with the law, but that, though they were obscure, it was not at all to be apprehended that the intelligent and thinking portion of the community, who would read the book through with attention, would derive any harm from it; and that as for careless and ignorant people, they, according to their custom, would look only at the beginning and end of the book, which contain no obscurities, and are manifestly, and at first sight, in accordance with the law. This reasoning is ingenious; but it may nevertheless be doubted whether the Rabbins in question saw through all the difficulties in the middle of the book so clearly as to be able to demonstrate that it is all in accordance with the rest of scripture. Even the great Maimonides, in his Moreh Nevochim, lib. ii. chap. 29, while he is defending Solomon from the erroneous opinion attributed to him by some commentators, that the world has existed from all eternity (that is, in its present state), allows him to be in favour of another doctrine, which we as Christians do not hold,

viz. That the earth is to remain in its present state to all eternity. His words are as follows :

“ Many men who hold our law think that Solomon believed “ in the existence of our world from all eternity. But it is “ wonderful that any one holding the law of Moses should be- “ lieve in this doctrine. And if it had come into the mind of “ one who did not believe the statements of our law, it would “ not be wonderful; but God has shewn that this cannot have “ been the case with Solomon, because all the prophets and “ wise men received his writings *as canonical*, and never called “ them in question, nor even after his death spoke at all dis- “ paragingly of him on this ground, as we find that they did “ with respect to certain ‘strange women,’ and several other “ matters; but what has led men to think so is the fact, that “ ‘our wise men sought to hide the book of Ecclesiastes because “ of the apparent inconsistencies of many of its expressions;’ “ and there can be no doubt that that book, taken in its obvious “ sense, contains expressions apparently repugnant to belief in “ the law. But as to the existence of the world from eternity, “ there is no passage to indicate that such was his belief, though “ there is one, it is true, which shews that *he believed that* “ the world will not perish, but last for ever. Because then “ they saw that there was a verse proving the stability of the “ world, they thought erroneously that he believed that the “ world was not created. Now the verse which speaks of the “ future eternal duration of the world is this: ‘The earth abides “ for ever.’ Some have interpreted the expression סְלִילָה as “ signifying only for a ‘definite’ time. But I should like to “ know what they will make of the passage which we find in “ David, Ps. x. 4, 5: ‘He has founded the earth on its basis “ that it should not be removed for ever and ever,’ טַהֲרֵתָה. “ But if you should say that the expression טַהֲרֵתָה does not “ demonstrate its eternal duration, but only its duration for a “ definite time, you will necessarily say at the same time, that

" the Creator will only reign for a definite time, as we find in
 " Ps. x. 16 : 'The Lord is king עֶזְרָם וְעוֹלָם for ever and ever.'
 " Now it is generally allowed that עֶלְם does not denote eter-
 " nity of duration except when joined with עַד. Solomon there-
 " fore speaks less strongly than David ; but David furthermore,
 " in the 148th Psalm, assures us that the heavens and all things
 " they contain will last for ever, and will suffer no change ;
 " where he says, 'Praise the Lord in the heavens, &c.' to
 " where he says, 'he hath established them for ever and ever,'
 " עֲשֵׂת נִתְּנָה לֹא יַעֲבֹר and he adds, חֲקָקְנִתִּים לֹא יִعַמְּדוּ, i.e. 'be-
 " cause the precepts which he has given will not be changed ;'
 " where by 'precepts' he intends 'the laws of nature,' i. e. 'the
 " laws of the constitution of heaven and earth ordained before
 " they were created.' But that they were created, is clear
 " from what he says, 'he commanded, and they were created.'
 " Jeremiah also says, 'Thus saith the Lord, who maketh the
 " sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and
 " the stars for a light by night ; if those ordinances depart from
 " before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall
 " cease from being a nation before me for ever.' Here he in-
 " forms us that those laws are never to be abrogated, though
 " they were at first put into operation by supreme power.
 " Solomon says, too, that 'all things which God has made,'
 "(viz. the world and all things in it) 'are stable in their
 " nature, although all are created things ;' for he has these
 " words, 'All things which God has made shall be for ever ;
 " no one can diminish from them or add to them ;' and he thus
 " at the same time states that the world and all that is in it is
 " the work of God, and assigns the reason of their eternal
 " duration in the words, 'There is no adding to them or di-
 " minishing from them ;' as if he had said, 'everything which
 " suffers change, suffers it either in consequence of some defect
 " in it, where there is a want of perfection, or of some super-
 " abundance of something not necessary to its perfection ; but

"since the works of the Creator are absolutely perfect, and "no addition or diminution can be made in them, they will "necessarily remain as they are, because there is nothing to "induce change in them'."

I have asserted in the commentary, in a note on the verse, "the earth abideth for ever," that the passages which Maimonides appears to take in the sense, that "the heavens and earth are to remain for ever in their present state," do not necessarily bear that signification. I shall now endeavour to establish this assertion, and shew that these passages are consistent both with themselves and with the rest of scripture. As to the two passages which that illustrious author quotes from the book of Ecclesiastes, it may be confidently affirmed, that, when correctly translated, they will not serve his purpose at all, and that he is consequently one of those (with all due respect be it spoken for so great a name) who have unintentionally perverted and misrepresented the words of this difficult book.

The first of them is far more consistent with the general sense of the chapter, if we take it, with Mendelssohn, to mean that while plants and animals are continually nourished by the earth, and returning again to it by the processes of corruption, the mass or bulk of the earth continues precisely and invariably the same, because not a particle of matter perishes, and nothing (as far as we can conceive) is ever added from without to the mass of the earth, so that the element is going a constant revolution, like air, fire, and water; and the second passage should be translated "all that God appoints (not 'makes') is fixed for ever."

Far more important as respects his argument are the citations which he makes as parallel passages to these two, (for it is the belief of Solomon on the duration of the world that he is discussing). They are, Ps. civ. 5: "He hath founded the earth on its basis that it should not be removed for ever;" which merely expresses the stability of the earth's motions, and no

more implies that it is absolutely at rest than the word “rise” as applied to the sun, either in scripture or in ordinary conversation, implies that he actually moves round the earth; again, Ps. cxlviii. 1—4: “Praise ye the Lord; praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights. Praise ye him, all his angels; praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon; praise ye him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree which shall not pass;” and Jeremiah xxxi. 35, 36: “Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease to be a nation before me for ever.” From these passages in their literal signification, Maimonides evidently collects that the present condition of external and visible things is to continue the same for ever. I would explain them, however, without deviating from the system of literal interpretation which Maimonides adopts, as referring entirely and exclusively to the permanence of the laws and motions of the orbs of our system, not to that of the present face of nature, which is even continually undergoing change, and, as we are expressly informed by the New Testament, is at some time to be destroyed by fire. And such change or convulsions in the mass of the earth are quite possible along with the immutability of the motions and bulk of the earth with reference to the other bodies of the solar system, as the results of geology abundantly testify; and it is this immutability alone that is asserted by the Psalmist, and appealed to by the Lord through Jeremiah. Besides, it is very remarkable that the Lord by his prophet Isaiah appeals to the perpetuity of a new order of

things in heaven and earth, hereafter to be produced, as an evidence of the same eternal favour which in the above passage of Jeremiah he declares to be equally permanent with the laws of heaven and earth. He says, “Behold, I make new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind;” and afterwards, in the lxvith Chapter, “As the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me, so shall your seed and your name remain;” and again, “The heavens may depart, and the earth be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from you, nor the covenant of my peace be removed.” These passages must have escaped the recollection of the great author of the Moreh Nevochim, or he surely would have discussed them at this place. They can only be reconciled with the above passages from the Psalms and Jeremiah, as well as with the prophecies of the New Testament, when all are taken in their obvious and primary signification, by supposing that a superficial change is to take place in the face of nature, while the laws of the great phenomena of heaven and earth continue unaltered.

In order to establish this theory more fully to the satisfaction of the reader, I would first direct his careful attention to several portions of the prophecy of Isaiah, which, however applicable they be in their secondary interpretation to the prosperity of the Church of Christ, can never, in their primary and obvious meaning, be taken to express anything else than this; that though the nation of Israel be long “forsaken and hated,” and “desolate,” they do not cease to be the chosen people of God, and that at some future time, however distant, his favour to them will be again openly manifested as it was of old; that “though the mountains depart, and the hills be removed, the Lord’s kindness will not depart from them,” but that they will be restored to their own land and to all the privileges which they have long forfeited, and that all the nations of the earth, “the Gentiles,” will contribute to this consumma-

tion, and thenceforth regard "Jerusalem" as "the holy city," and its inhabitants as "the priests of the Lord," themselves performing the offices of servants, "plowmen and vinedressers" to the holy people; that they will build up the walls of Jerusalem; and, whereas "they had afflicted her, they shall bow themselves down at the soles of her feet." This humiliation of the Gentiles before the chosen people must clearly have respect to events to take place in our world and "in time." Such acts of national service and allegiance are inconsistent with the idea of a spiritual state. And we also learn from another passage which has been already quoted, that the peculiar favour of God to Israel as a nation is not to cease with time. The Lord says, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered or come into mind; but be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create, for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy, &c." (Is. lxv. 17).

The passages to which I would direct the reader's careful attention, with respect to the restoration of the Israelites to their own land, are Is. liv., Is. lx. lxi. lxii. lxv. 17—25, lxvi. 5—23.

Assuming, then, that the favour of God to the Israelitish race is to be eternal, as the primary signification of these passages unquestionably proves, let us now turn to the verses in Jeremiah in ch. xxxi. the whole of which is to the same effect as the above chapters of Isaiah, and where we find a declaration very much to our purpose: "Thus saith the Lord, If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off the seed of Israel for all that they have done." In juxtaposition with this most decisive declaration, whose primary interpretation is unquestionable, we have, "Thus saith the Lord, who maketh the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances (*laws*) of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, &c. If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease

from being a nation before me for ever." Now here we have the eternal stability of the laws and phenomena of the heavenly bodies with respect to the earth appealed to as an evidence of, and coexistent with, the eternal favour of God to his people Israel as a nation in this world, and to the redeemed of them in the next. If then those laws and phenomena are to be altered or confounded, when the superficial heavens and earth are to be remodelled, (which will not be the case if the earth and planets continue to revolve about the sun,) the prophet would be here appealing to a mutable thing as an evidence of, and coeternal with, the duration of an immutable, and placing the impossibility of measuring illimitable things in the same category with the eternal stability of what is destined to be subverted, viz. that of being equally certain with the endless endurance of God's favour to Israel. On the contrary, according to the hypothesis which I have adopted, the whole of this important prophecy is perfectly consistent, even on its most literal interpretation (which in the words of divine truth ought to be first attended to), both with itself and the revelations of the New Testament; an argument in favour of that hypothesis, which I think it would be difficult if not impossible to remove. It cannot be that in this place, as is the case in several passages of the Bible, which never seeks to reveal physical truths, the Lord is speaking in condescension to the ordinary ideas and language of those whom he addressed. The Jews had no revelation in the Mosaic law touching the eternal stability of the "ordinances of heaven and earth," any more than they had about a future state, or any matters not immediately affecting their temporal interests; but allowing, which is just possible, that such a belief was prevalent among them, arising from the above-mentioned verses in the Psalms to this effect, it cannot be supposed that, if this belief were false, the Lord would thus even indirectly sanction an unmitigated error, in favour of which they had not even the fallacious evidence of the senses. Where

the sun is spoken of as moving round the earth, &c., scriptural language is adapted to common parlance, and is correct in respect to relative and apparent motion; and so of other instances which might be mentioned; but here no such explanation can exist, and therefore no evasion of the literal and obvious meaning. It was not the intention of the Deity in this place, any more than in other parts of scripture, to reveal physical truths, the knowledge of which is not necessary to the well-being of mankind; but that which is incidently involved here cannot, I think, be evaded, or explained away.

The next misapplication which I have occasion to notice of passages in this book is one arising entirely from the defects in our English version. Bishop Warburton in his celebrated book entitled, "The Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated," puts the main part of his argument in the following form: (1) "That the ancient lawgivers and the most wise and learned nations of antiquity universally believed, what is undoubtedly true, that the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments is necessary to the well-being of a civil society, unless it be supported by an extraordinary providence, or, in other words, be a Theocracy; and that if a civil society be not supported by the doctrine of a future state, it can be supported only by an extraordinary providence. (2) That Moses, an ancient law-giver, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, (the principal branch of which wisdom was inculcating the doctrine of a future state), did institute a civil society which had no doctrine of a future state for its support; and that as Moses did not teach, or rather forbore to teach, the doctrine of a future state, so neither had the people of Israel, at least so long as their civil polity retained its original form, any certain knowledge of it. (3) That the conclusion from these premises is, that Moses believed that the civil polity which he established was supported by an extraordinary providence; i. e. was a Theocracy, and that it actually was so, and continued to be

so, until the people proved themselves unworthy of such a distinction."

In establishing the minor of the above premises, he has occasion to quote several passages of scriptural writers from the time of Moses downwards, in which the existence of a future state, so far from being recognised, appears rather to be altogether denied; thus, that Job says, "As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more;" and again, "There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again—though the root thereof wax old in the ground, and the stock thereof die in the earth, yet through the scent of water it will bud and bring forth boughs, like a plant. But man dieth and wasteth away, yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? as the waters fall from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up, so man lieth down and riseth not till the heavens be no more; they shall not awake or be raised out of their sleep;" thus, contrary to the argument of St Paul, opposing the revival of a vegetable to the irrecoverable death of a rational animal; and again, that the Psalmist says, "In death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" and again, "What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? shall the dust praise thee, shall it declare thy truth?" and, "Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave, or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" and in another place, "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence;" but besides saying, that the dead forget God, that he goes further, and says, that God forgets them. "I am counted with them that go down into the pit,—free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more, and are cut off from thine hand;" where the words "free,"

and “cut off,” indicate, as he shows, “utter separation,” and that they are no longer the objects of the divine providence, or moral government; and that Hezekiah says, “They that go down into the grave cannot hope for thy truth.”

Now all these passages are very much to his purpose, because they are evidently spoken with reference to the current belief of the people of Israel at that time, (such as we might have expected it to be from the entire omission in the Mosaic law of any reference to future rewards and punishments, as a motive of faithful allegiance to the divine Ruler), and, consequently, indicate what that belief was; viz. that though the soul might survive the body, it simply returned to God who gave it. But they do not at all prove that eminent individuals among that nation, as for instance, these very writers, held themselves the sentiments expressed in them. That they had a deeper insight into the hidden meaning of the Mosaic law, and had derived more certain knowledge of a future state from nearer converse with the Deity, appears from expressions of their own to a very different effect, where they are evidently recording their own assurance and experimental belief; as where Job says, “I know that my Redeemer liveth,” &c., and the Psalmist, “In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand pleasures for evermore;” and, “I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness.” On the contrary, a passage in the book of Ecclesiastes, which the bishop quotes from our English version, would, if he had rightly applied it, and taken it in connection with the rest of the argument of which it forms a part, when correctly explained, have answered his purpose equally well, without conveying the paradox which it at present does, as it stands isolated in his book; I mean, that the wisest of men in a grave and cool discussion, wherein he states the results of his own reasoning, without reference to popular opinion, should assert “that the dead know nothing at all, and have no more any reward, for that their very memory is forgotten;”

and again, should speak of it as a matter of the most absolute uncertainty, whether the spirit of man has an upward tendency, and a higher destiny, than that of the beast. It will be seen, by reference to my translation, that the wise man in both these places, instead of denying, is using the most subtle arguments he can devise to prove the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, and that it is only on a most imperfect view of the condition of man, that it is possible to come to the conclusions mentioned in those verses.

It is true that when Solomon dedicated his new-built temple, he addressed a long public prayer to the God of Israel, consisting throughout of a solemn petition for the continuance of the old covenant made by the ministry of Moses, (the efficacy of which there was some reason to fear had begun to decline,) and that while he therein states at large the sanction of the Jewish institutions, he speaks of nothing but temporal rewards and punishments, without the least intimation of a future state; but this silence cannot be taken to imply anything with regard to his own belief on that subject. He is there praying for the continuance of a temporal Theocracy, of which temporal rewards and punishments, and not future, are the necessary sanction. But in the book of Ecclesiastes, which is evidently the result of mature deliberation, he endeavours to prove, to the satisfaction of the individual reader, the existence of a future state by the same arguments which uninspired reason would use on that subject. He writes in the way of open discussion, employing, to the best of his ability, that degree of wisdom wherewith he was endowed. But while divine superintendence prevented him from writing what was erroneous, so that his disquisition comes to us with the authority of inspiration, it does not appear to have revealed to him any matters above ordinary human ken; otherwise he would not have had occasion to confess his inability, by all the methods of investigation, to discover the origin of evil, or to have resort to

the ordinary arguments of human reason to demonstrate a future state. Now it is evident that the book of Ecclesiastes, when thus understood, agreeably with Mendlessohn's elucidations, would have proved a far more incontrovertible argument in favour of the bishop's statement, than the garbled quotations mentioned above. If it be true that Solomon has treated the existence of a future state of recompence, as an article of faith in his own time by no means satisfactorily established, or, at least, as one which he was not authorised in taking for granted by any previous direct revelation, and which therefore required demonstration by the deductions of human reason; and if he has accordingly compared the respective merits of various arguments for it, and at last decided that it is best inferred from the fact that it is theoretically requisite in order to explain the moral condition of man in this life consistently with the justice of the divine government;—if all this, I say, be true, (as it will at once be seen to be by a reference to the version of Ecclesiastes which follows) the inference is well-nigh inevitable, that the information of the Hebrews on this subject as a nation, and therefore as derived from the Mosaic law, was extremely limited and imperfect, and that correct and influential speculations concerning it were confined to a few philosophic individuals, and did not extend to the multitude. This inference has been unfortunately lost to the bishop, evidently in consequence of his having neglected in this place to consult the original Hebrew of the verses he quotes, whereby he might have perceived that the sense which the received translation has led him to attach to them, is not permitted by the context.

In pointing out this inaccuracy in Warburton's most learned and conclusive discourse, I hope I may not be suspected of presumptuously attempting to detract in the slightest degree from its incomparable merits. All I have sought to shew is, that the argument which he has so uncontroversially established, might in this particular article of the proof have been more

ably and successfully supported, had he considered a little more carefully the nature and design of the book of Ecclesiastes, which in fact bears at least quite as much upon his subject as that of Job, to which he devotes so much space.

Mendlessohn states in his preface, that the commentators who had preceded him, had given no attention to the connection of the verses of the book of Ecclesiastes, but had treated them as separate and unconnected maxims, thereby abusing the division into verses, which was originally intended merely to facilitate reference to a word or passage. This error seems to have been of very ancient date, and to have given rise to the misunderstanding and consequent misapplication of many single verses, which when explained by means of the context, bear a totally different sense from that in which they were quoted. Thus the verse, "Let thy garments be always white, and let thy head lack no ointment," cannot be taken by itself, the rest of the passage of which it forms a part being absolutely necessary to its explanation. The context shews it to be nothing but a recommendation to man, if his only portion be in this life, to make the enjoyment of it his sole and unceasing study, and to indulge himself in every possible species of luxury and comfort, but only if that be the case. The writers of the Babylonish Talmud, however, and after them Maimonides, have employed the verse as an isolated maxim, and based upon it the doctrine of the duty of a constant state of penitence for sin, as the best preparation for death, which may overtake us at any moment. (White garments, it must be observed, were then, as they are with the Romish church, the sign of penance.) The passage in the Babylonish Talmud, Treatise Schabbas, sect. xxiii. is this, "Rabbi Eleazar used to say, 'Repent one day before thou diest.' On his disciples asking him, 'How can a man know the day on which he is to die?' he said to them, 'So much more ought he to repent to-day lest he die to-morrow, and consequently he ought to be

engaged in repentance all his days,' according as Solomon said, 'Let thy garments be always white, and let thy head lack no ointment.' And then follows a parable in illustration of this by Rabbi Jochanan, wherein he describes a number of guests invited to a feast without the time being appointed; and some of them kept themselves constantly dressed and in readiness, knowing that in a king's house a feast might be served at a moment's notice; while others went about their own business, thinking that because a feast takes time to prepare, they would surely have time to dress; the king summoned the guests suddenly, and then those who were not dressed had to stand and look on while those who were dressed feasted.

Maimonides' remarks on the subject of penitence are to the same effect. Similarly, Maimonides employs another verse, which occurs in the same passage with the above, as an isolated maxim and an absolute truth, whereas it in fact contains nothing but a false hypothesis, (as Mendelssohn has ably shewn in his preface and commentary,) and takes 'בְּ' to mean "for," where it can have no other meaning to suit the context but "if," or "for that," which in an argument may mean the same as "if." We mean the verse, "If there be no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, &c." which the context clearly implies is far from being the case. The passage in question in the *Yad-Hachazakah* is translated by Mr Bernard in his *Selections* from that book, and is very interesting, as shewing what I have already stated, that the more pious and intellectual of the Israelitish nation comprehended the hidden meaning of the Mosaic law, so as to perceive its institutions to be types of a future state, and its precepts instructions how to prepare for that state. He says, "What means that which 'is written through the whole of the law, 'If ye obey, such 'and such things shall come upon you; but if ye obey not, such 'and such things shall befall you;' all these being things which 'relate to this world, as for instance, plenty or famine, war or

" peace, kingly power or degradation, possession of the land or
" captivity, success in enterprise or total ruin, and other worldly
" concerns? Now all these things actually have come to pass,
" and will again come to pass, so that whenever we fulfil all
" the commandments of the law, all the good things of the
" world are to come upon us, and whenever we trespass against
" the same, the evil things recorded in the law are to befall us.
" But still these good things are by no means to be the ultimate
" reward bestowed for the fulfilling the commandments, nor
" these evils to be the ultimate punishment inflicted on him
" who trespasses against all these commandments. But these
" blessings and curses ought to be understood as signifying,
" 'If ye do serve the Lord joyfully, and keep his way, he will
" bountifully diffuse over you all these blessings, and remove
" from you all these curses, so that ye may live at leisure
" and ease, grow wise by the law, and employ yourselves in
" studying and fulfilling the same, to the end that ye may
" attain unto the life of the world that is to come,' 'that it
" may be well with thee' in that world which is altogether
" good, and that thou mayest prolong thy days in that world
" which is to endure very long; and consequently ye will par-
" take of the blessings of both worlds, namely, of a happy life
" in this world, such as will also serve to bring you into the life
" of the world to come; for if a man were not to acquire wis-
" dom and perform good actions here below, he would have no
" means of rendering himself worthy of the blessings of the
" world to come, seeing that it is said, 'For there is no work,
" or device, or knowledge, or wisdom in the grave.' But if ye
" forsake the Lord, and are absorbed in carnal pleasures, he
" will bring upon you all these curses, and remove from you
" all these blessings, so that your days shall be wasted in con-
" fusion and terror, so that ye shall neither have peace of mind,
" nor perfect good health, such as are requisite to enable you
" to fulfil the commandments, to the end that ye may forfeit

" your lives in the world to come. And consequently ye will have forfeited both worlds, inasmuch as when a man is troubled in this world with illness, war, or famine, he can neither employ himself in the pursuits of wisdom, nor in fulfilling the commandments, which are the only means of attaining unto the life of the world to come."

Again, we find that the Rabbins based on Eccles. xii. 12, " But more than these (*the words of the wise*) is to be well advised in practice," their hackneyed phrase בְּנֵי הַזָּר בְּדִבְרֵי סֹפֶרִים יוֹתֵר מִדִּבְרֵי תּוֹרָה " My son, attend or take heed to the words of the scribes more than to those of the law;" where, by "the words of the scribes," they intended the oral tradition recorded in the Mishna and Gemara. We may here mention that there are several strong expressions of the Jewish sages to the same effect. Thus, when Rabbi Eleazar was on his death-bed, and some of his disciples asked him to teach them the way of life, that they might so attain the life to come, he replied, (vid. Cod. juris Berachoth, fol. 28. ii.), חֲדָרָיו בְּכָבוֹד חֲבִירִיכֶם וַיְמַעַן בְּנֵיכֶם מִן הַהֲנִין וְהַשְׁׂיבָם בֵּין בְּרֵיכִי הַחֲכָמִים i. e. "take heed to honour your fellow-disciples, and turn away your children from biblical study, and place them between the knees of the sages;" where the gloss of a commentator informs us that לא means מַנְעֵי פָּנֵן הַהֲנִין " Ne assuefaciatis vos in lectione bibliâ plus quam satis est." And so in the Jerusalem Talmud, Berachoth Captitor, fol. 121, רַבָּא אָמַר תַּנֵּע לְקַשְׁדִבְרֵי סֹפֶרִים חֲבִירִים מִדִּבְרֵי נְבִיאִים Rabba said, " Know that the words of the scribes are more lovely than the words of the prophets;" and the reason assigned for the common phrase, " sapientes præstantiores sunt prophetis," was, " that the prophets were obliged to confirm their doctrine by miracles and signs," but of the sages it is absolutely and

simply said, Deut. xvii. 10, "Thou shalt observe to do all that they shall teach thee."

Mendlessohn has unquestionably done more than all other commentators put together towards vindicating Solomon from past aspersions on his consistency with himself and the rest of Scripture, and preventing false inferences from his writings for the future. With his exception, those who have done most towards the elucidation of this book, have not been those who have edited it separately, but those who have published voluminous and learned editions of the whole Bible, as Dathe, Michaelis, and Rosenmuller, especially the latter, whose work is one of unrivalled merit and execution.

Desveux, who published a heavy quarto edition of this book, has done little for it. His new version and analytical paraphrase are immeasurably inferior in accuracy and clearness to our biblical version, and therefore had better have been dispensed with. His philological notes contain much valuable, though occasionally inaccurate, information. They are unfortunately so ill arranged, that the absence of an index greatly impairs their utility. There is one striking point of contrast between this learned author and Mendlessohn. While the former devotes nearly the whole of his attention and research to the discovery of new readings, by means of which he hopes to present a more intelligible version of the book to his reader; Mendlessohn, who from his Jewish education, and profound erudition, was best of all men qualified to form a decisive judgment on the subject, had such a scrupulous veneration for the recension of the Masora, and the received text of the Old Testament, that both here, and in his edition of the Pentateuch, he disturbs not a single vowel-point or accent, but invariably shapes his interpretation agreeably to them; nor did he, with philological and antiquarian ostentation, ransack libraries and travel in search of MSS. and copies, or pretend to supply chasms, prune redundancies, or alter readings. Accordingly, the Masoretic text is

closely followed in the following version and annotations ; and I have simply made it my business to elicit the most lucid and consistent sense from it, and to establish the renderings finally determined on by the most satisfactory arguments I could devise. The result has invariably been, that however unpromising or impracticable some verses appeared at first, the more patiently and accurately they were considered the more did they gradually approve themselves as the true readings, till at last they were found to yield a clear meaning in perfect accordance with the sense of the context. This is far from being the case with confessedly corrupt passages in classical writers, and is therefore a strong testimony in favour of the excellence and accuracy of our Hebrew text. For some time I was inclined to think that a better sense might be obtained in xii. 10. 11. by a different division of those verses, i.e. by altering the place of the פָּזֶב (:) between them, and placing it before the last two words of 10. ; but closer consideration convinced me of the correctness of the text.

As for the version of the Septuagint, though it be too close a rendering of the original to be good Greek, or even sense, in many places, it is sometimes valuable as shewing what the readings were in the copy from which that version was made ; but still it must be recollectcd that the first interpreters, who-ever, and in whatever number they were, translated none but the first five books of Moses. The other books of the Old Testament were translated at different times and by different hands, as appears from the difference of the style and method ; so that marginal notes to the Septuagint in general, intended to illustrate one passage by another, can be of little use. The interpreter of this book, as is constantly the case in Aquila's version, makes no allowance for the difference of the genius of the two languages, but renders literally, and word for word ; and even translates a Hebrew word which bears different senses in different places invariably by the same Greek word, which does not admit of the same modifications of meaning ; thus he renders

“**מִן**” by “συν,” where it is merely the sign of the accusative case, as well as where it is used as a preposition.

I will give a few instances of his style, and of the inferences which may be made with regard to the Hebrew copy from which he translated. He renders ch. v. 7. “ότι ἐν πληθεῖ ἐνυπνιῶν,” κ. τ. λ....“ότι τον θεον φοβοῦ.” Now to render **כִּי** invariably “because” or “for,” (Græce “ότι,”) would make nonsense of half the Bible. It is an adverb which bears every variety of sense, and here signifies in the first place “for,” and in the latter, “but,” (as I have rendered it,) or, as some commentators have taken it, “surely.” Again, in ver. 1, we have “καὶ ἐγγὺς του ἀκονειν, ὑπέρ δομα τῶν ἀφρονῶν θυσια σου ὅτι οὐκ εἰσιν εἰδότες του ποιησαι κακον,” which is perfect nonsense; and yet the Greek and Hebrew words, taken separately, correspond each to each, except with respect to the word *σου*. Here his copy must have read the affix **תְּ**. In x. 4, he renders **מַרְפֵּא** by *ιαμα*, which was probably the only rendering he knew of the word, but in this place makes no sense at all. In xii. 10, he places “γεγραμμενον,” as if it agreed with “λογον;” at any rate, if γεγραμμενον be not substituted for it, there is no construction. It is quite clear that his copy cannot have been a Masoretic one (and this is some evidence in favour of the opinion of the more recent date of the Masoretic text, maintained by Elias Levita, who attributes it to the synagogue of Tiberias, and an age subsequent by two centuries at least to the Christian era, whereas the judgment of antiquity is in favour of its ascription to Ezra and his colleagues); for in several places, where, according to his custom, he has put words together that make no sense, rather than alter a single letter in his Hebrew copy, it manifestly must have differed from the Masoretic text. The above passage in verse 1 of vth chapter, is an instance of this. Again in ii. 3. he writes “*וְאֵין אַלְוֹן*,” regardless of the sense, (where we have “with wine” from **לִבְנָה**) so that his reading must have been **לִבְנָה**. In ii. 12, he has

את-אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂו הַשְׁוִיחַ, as a rendering of ἀποιησεν αυτην, so that he must have read עָשָׂו, and understood these words to mean, "what he" (the king) "did before," not "what they" (others) "did before." In vii. 15, he has ἐστι δίκαιος ἀπολλυμένος ἐν δίκαιῳ αὐτον. Here he must have read בָּזִידָקָן, instead of בָּזִיקָן, and has rendered literally, though it was as evident then, as it is now, that ἐν δίκαιῳ made no sense. He must have had some strangely different reading at viii. 12, אֲשֶׁר חָמֵת מֵאַת וּמִאַרְיךָ לֹא, which he renders ὁ ἡμαρτεν ἐποιησε το πονηρον ἀπο τοτε και ἀπο μακροτητος αὐτων. As this passage stands in our Hebrew text, it is a very difficult one, because we have to supply פְּעֻם (times) after מֵאַת to make it signify "a hundred times," and מִאַרְיךָ before מִאַרְיךָ. Probably he read מִעֵת (תְּעֵת tempus), since the next passage which we shall mention suggests the idea that the interpreter may have rendered the text from the Hebrew as read to him by another, when such a mistake might easily arise. And in the word מִעֵת he must have regarded בְּ as the preposition "from," as well as the בְּ in מִאַרְיךָ; and the rest of the word, which he perhaps read אַרְךָ as Symmachus does, as a substantive denoting "length;" and as for לֹא, it cannot be said how he disposed of it. The passage we allude to, where perhaps his ear deceived him, is x. 10, where he has και αυτος προσωπον ἐταραξε, as a rendering of קָלַל בְּנִים קָלַל, where he must have read קָלַל חַלְל, which is similar in sound to קָלַל, and derived it from חַלְל or חַלְל, which both mean sometimes ταρασσειν; but as no sense can be made of that rendering, he might have suspected its genuineness, had not his scheme been here, as elsewhere, merely to give for every Hebrew word which he found in his copy a particular Greek word which he had fixed upon as equivalent to it, and to retain this invariably, without enquiring whether the general sense of the version corresponded with that of the original.

The version of the Vulgate cannot be of much service in the elucidation of so difficult a book as the present, because its author, St Jerome, does not appear to have been deeply versed in the Hebrew language, and, consequently, followed the Septuagint version wherever he met with any difficulty; and he lived at an age when as yet little had been done for the elucidation of the difficulties of the Old Testament, and before those distinguished commentators flourished, from whom Mendelssohn has so largely drawn, as he himself informs us in his preface that he has done.

Those commentators of whom Mendelssohn speaks in the highest terms, and who are confessedly, with Kimchi, the first of Jewish literati, are Yarchi and Aben Ezra. The first of these, the most voluminous of Rabbinical commentators, is usually designated by the word "רשי" a contraction for רבי שלמה בן יצחק, and the name "Yarchi" has been given to him rather by a most unaccountable common use, than for any assignable reason. Some have even devised the far-fetched reason that he was born at Lunel, a town in Aquitania, (which however was not really the case), and that he was called ירחִי because ירחַ in Hebrew means the moon, "luna," so that he was "quasi lunaris." He was, in fact, born at Trecis, or "Augusta Tricassinorum," in France, as authors of high authority say, in the year 1030, and that he lived seventy-five years. This makes it very remarkable that Moses Maimonides, who was born in 1131, and is generally unsparing of his panegyric, hardly makes any allusion to him. The only probable mention of him in his writings is where he says that he had abstained from writing certain commentaries, from finding that he had been anticipated by a Gaul. We can only explain this silence by the fact that Maimonides had a strong prejudice against the French Rabbins, which may have prevented him from giving Raschi the attention which he deserved. He warns his son against them in one of his letters, telling

him that, though they studied the Talmud diligently, they were sensualists, and indulged their bodily appetites. He says, (*Gau!*) וְשִׁבְעָרֶת נַפְשָׁךְ מִאָדָם מִקְבָּרֵי רֹוב חֲבָרִי אֲגַשְׁי צָרָבֶת : and ends thus, אֶלְהָדָם עָבֹד, וַתּוֹרְתָּם שְׂמָעוֹר, וַמְּהָם הַרְחָקָה : His remarks do not apply in justice to Raschi, who was remarkable for his purity of life; but nevertheless he includes them all in this sweeping condemnation. At the same time he recommends Aben Ezra's writings to his especial study. Raschi wrote commentaries on nearly the whole of the Talmud, as well as the whole of the Bible; and his interpretations are esteemed above all others. Their style, however, is very concise and obscure, with a frequent mixture of French words; and several commentaries on his writings have been published. He was called "הַמְּאוֹר הַפְּדוֹל," "the great light," and "the light of the captivity," and also *κατ' εξοχην*, "מִפְּרָשׁ הַהְתָּחָת" "interpres legis," also שָׁבֵטִי יְהִידָה, *Rāsh*, from the letters *RASH*, i. e. "princeps tribuum Iudeorū."

Rabbi Abraham Ben Meir Aben Ezra (Aben is Arabic for grandson) was the first of Jewish literati, and the best Hebrew scholar that ever lived. He died in the year 1194, aged seventy-five, (*eleven years before Maimonides.*) He was born at Toledo, in Spain. He lived at Rhodes in the latter part of his life. Maimonides eulogizes him in the highest degree. He is far superior to Raschi in perspicuity and elegance of style. He wrote on grammar, philosophy, astronomy, medicine, and many commentaries on the Bible and Cabala, as well as poetry.

The preface of Mendelssohn to his commentary, wherein he states his obligations to these and other distinguished commentators, is well worthy the reader's attentive consideration, as furnishing a correct statement of the several methods of interpreting scripture in use among the Jews, and the reasons the Rabbins had for adopting them, and containing likewise valuable

remarks on several passages of this book, which do not occur in his commentary. Allowance must be made for the almost religious veneration with which he, as well as the rest of his nation, regard the Rabbins quoted in the Talmud and Zohar. He always takes it for granted that whatever they said or did implied the deepest and most comprehensive wisdom, and therefore makes it his business to discover their implied meaning. Of the Rabbinical writers of later date he ventures to speak more freely.

Before I lay his preface before the reader, I shall give a sketch of the life and opinions of this distinguished man, which I have chiefly compiled from M. Samuels.

Moses Mendlessohn was born in September, 1729, at Dessau in Germany. According to the then prevailing system of educating Jewish boys, Mendlessohn was sent to the public seminary, where children were taught to prattle mechanically the Mishna and Gemara, concerning laws of betrothing, divorce, legal damages, sacerdotal functions, and other similar matters above their comprehension, before they were able to read and understand a single text of scripture correctly. Mendlessohn, however, was not like other children; already at that tender age, the spirit of inquiry stirred within him, and he apprehended that he was not pursuing the proper course to arrive at solid knowledge. Finding that without knowing the Hebrew language grammatically, it would be out of his power to see his way clearly through any Commentary, it being impossible to verify the rules and directions laid down by the later commentators, without knowing how to trace the outlines marked by the primitive teachers; he resolved to make scripture his principal study, and to use himself to write Hebrew with purity and elegance; an accomplishment which he seems not to have been long in acquiring; for before his tenth year he had composed Hebrew verses, which however, when he arrived at a riper age, so little pleased his taste as a critic, that he would

never after compose another line of original poetry in that language. "I have no genius for poetry," he would say. "My mind is more disposed to penetrate into the deep recesses of the understanding, than to roam in the lighter regions of fancy." Nevertheless his metrical translation of the Psalms, and other scriptural books, are splendid proofs of his eminent knowledge of the art of poetry, although he himself had but a mean opinion of his powers in this respect; witness the letter he wrote to the celebrated bard, Professor Rammel, in which he requested the professor to let the Psalms undergo the ordeal of his examination, before they were published. Thus industrious, Mendlessohn soon made himself master of the text of the Talmud, under the public tuition of Rabbi David Frankel, then chief Rabbi at Dessau, and of Scripture, without any teacher at all. And it has been asserted, by a creditable person who associated with him in his youth at Berlin, that he knew nearly the whole of the Law and the Prophets by heart.

At that time Maimonides' *Morah Nevochim*, (i. e. the Guide of the Perplexed), fell into his hands. To discover its transcendent beauties, and to strain every nerve in studying it, was one and the same thing with him. He meditated on it by day and night, till he had dived into the depth of its sublime thoughts; and, to his last moments, he acknowledged the benefit he had derived from this work. In early life he struggled with various difficulties, not only in the pursuit of knowledge, but even of a bare subsistence. He was not, however, doomed to pine all his life in obscurity and distress. Mr Bernard, an opulent man of the Jewish persuasion, hearing of Mendlessohn's talents and high moral character, admitted him into his house, and intrusted him with the education of his children. His salary now enabled him to supply his deficiency in books, and to take lessons in the Greek language, with which he had been hitherto unacquainted; while he devoted, as usual, his leisure hours to study and meditation. There was not a branch of

mathematics to which Mendelssohn did not apply himself; his knowledge of algebra, fluxions, and judicial astronomy, is said to have been considerable; and in general and natural history he was far above mediocrity.

The great mass of Jews in Germany and the surrounding countries, were, at that period, most deplorably deficient in education and useful knowledge. Even ordinary information and reading had almost vanished from amongst them, and few could be met with who knew Hebrew grammar, fewer still who knew that of any other language. Unsophisticated theologians and logical Talmudists too, had become perceptibly scarce in proportion as the vice of wandering from good sense, and the intelligible precepts of the primitive doctors,—of harping incessantly on philological quibbles, conjuring up doubts, inventing hypercriticisms, and interposing obstructions, when the straight and level road lay before them,—had got the ascendancy. The advantages of subtleizing the understanding, and sharpening the powers of perception, usually pleaded in favour of this practice, did not, by any means, outweigh its pernicious effects in disfiguring truth, so as even to render it indiscernible. Far-fetched and distorted quotations, arbitrary and preposterous definitions, together with eccentric deductions, became the grand points of Talmudic excellence, and the main qualifications for Rabbinical fame and preferment. A mind like Mendelssohn's must have been long disgusted with this folly; and at length he felt an irresistible impulse to warn the youth of his nation against this corrupt system, animate them to study grammar and literature methodically, and lead them in the path of rational inquiry, the only object of learning, in order that there might be, in future, fewer Talmudical mountebanks, and more solid scholars. His principal aim was to operate the cultivation of his brethren by means of Scripture; a method which has been strongly recommended by several of his learned successors. Scripture forms a Jew's religious and civil code, and is, con-

sequently, the source of his most important knowledge; useful truths, when conveyed through this medium, make the deeper impression, and become in a manner sacred to him. To this end he wrote his admirable translation of the Pentateuch, with a most elaborate commentary, which has since been the basis of religious and moral education with the Jews. Besides, he was ten years occupied on a metrical translation of the Psalms of David, with an ingenious preface on Hebrew poetry and music; to these must be added his translation of the Song of Songs, and his commentary on Ecclesiastes.

His love for his own nation was intimately united with his love for the religion of his ancestors; but while he lived and died a conscientious and consistent supporter of the doctrines of that religion, he invariably expressed in his writings the greatest veneration for the religion and morality of the New Testament: if he could with truth be called a free thinker, it was on this subject alone. He says, "I never openly controverted the Christian religion, nor will I ever engage in a controversy with any one of its sincere followers. And lest it should be said of me, that by that declaration I mean, as it were, to give to understand that I am well provided with formidable weapons, wherewithal to combat that religion, if I were so inclined, and that the Jews may possibly be in possession of secret traditions, of records now become scarce and unknown, whereby historical facts would be made to appear in a light different from that in which they are represented by Christians; in order once for all to remove all suspicions of that kind, I herewith affirm, before the public, that I have at least nothing new to bring forward against the faith of the Christians; that, for aught I know, we are acquainted with no other accounts of the historical facts, and can produce no other records than those which are universally known; and that I, on my part, have nothing to advance that has not been said and repeated

"innumerable times by Jews and Theists, and answered over
"and over again by the other party."

Again, in writing to one who had claimed him as a Christian on account of such expressions, he says, "You seem to think "it somewhat extraordinary, that I, a Jew, should speak in a "respectful manner of the religion of Jesus, that I do not hate "the Christians, and launch no invectives against them; I there- "fore suppose that you give few if any of my brethren credit "for that sort of discretion. Aben Ezra throws out only a few "cursory remarks on the Christian religion. Maimonides, to "my knowledge, never wrote against it. I readily and cor- "dially agree with you in what you say of the morality of "the New Testament. Christianity like yours, Sir, would "transform earth into a paradise; it is merely another name for "the purest system of Ethics. I was somewhat surprised at your "question, why I did not seek to make proselytes. The duty "of converting evidently arises from the principle, that out of "the pale of the established church no salvation is to be expect- "ed. Since I as a Jew am not bound to adopt that position, as "according to the doctrine of the Rabbins it is possible that the "good and virtuous of all nations shall enjoy eternal felicity, the "reason for proselyting falls to the ground. We certainly think "our external religion the best of all external religions, because "we believe it to be divine; but it does not thence follow that it "is absolutely the best. It is best for us and our posterity. "What external religion may be best for other nations perhaps "God has announced to them also through prophets. The same "principles of internal religion must be common to all."

As Mendelssohn, however, was accused of being sceptical as regarded the faith of his own nation, it is desirable to lay before the reader a statement of the origin of those charges. Mendelssohn will thus be seen to exculpate himself, at the same time that he gives us a view of the Jewish dispensation which comes to us on the authority of one who, from his education and

learning, and the direction of his studies, which for years were entirely devoted to the Pentateuch, must be eminently qualified to speak with decision.

It is clear from the passage last quoted, that it was his opinion that Judaism admits of no religious intolerance, or authoritative interference with the creed of those who profess it. Accordingly when Von Dohm, in his celebrated treatise on the Condition of the Jews as citizens of the state, "recommended that the elders of the synagogue should be invested with the power of punishing every Jew who deviated from the essentials of his creed with anathema, excommunication, and expulsion from their congregations, his spirit was roused to reply, and he did so in his preface to a translation of Manasseh Ben Israel's, "*Vindiciæ Judæorum*." He there discusses the question, "whether it be proper to give men the power of arraigning and punishing others for their religious opinions." (It is to be remembered that through this controversy he is speaking as a Jew, and that where he speaks of a church and its authority, he always means a Jewish church.) He says, "Civilized society requires of its members two things, "rectitude of conduct, and purity of intention, as the foundation of confidence and security in all mutual transactions "through life. With regard to the public conservation of the "first, 'rectitude of conduct,' it belongs to the magistrate, "whose province it is to punish the offender, and to right "the injured. The magistrate being thus invested with authority by the sovereign, it can make no difference to us "whether he be of this or that religion; for so soon as we "behold him on the judgment-seat, it behoves us to trust to "him to execute even justice to all alike, whether Jews or "Gentiles. The patient on the bed of death takes whatever "the physician prescribes, without enquiring whether he believes "in the God of Israel or no, because he knows that, as far as "he is concerned, all the physician's business is to cure the

" sick, and give relief, if possible. And if we act thus where
" life and death are concerned, we may surely in matters only
" relating to property and external things, place our reliance
" on the constituted judge, without fear that a difference of
" belief will influence his decision. On the other hand, the
" second requisite for the well-being of society, 'purity of in-
" tention,' is vested in the heart of every rational being; it
" does not depend on the will, but on the understanding; and
" is therefore not subject to magisterial controul, nor ought its
" opposite to be liable to punishment by the hands of man.
" What sensible person would pretend to reform his neigh-
" bour's thoughts, or to chasten his heart by coercion? If
" we meet in society with a man with a foward heart, with
" wild and improper notions on the fundamental points of re-
" ligion, we have no other power, but to reason with him in
" a mild and conciliatory manner, and to try to persuade him,
" by patient argument, to dismiss his erroneous opinions, and
" return to the wholesome doctrine; and to persevere in this,
" until we are certain that the delusion has left him. If we
" find him incorrigible, it will be better to discontinue our efforts,
" lest we should convert a sceptic, who had at least the merit
" of sincerity, into a hypocrite and a liar. Would it not be
" preferable to rouse his conscience, and mortify his presump-
" tion, by shewing him the humbleness of his condition, in
" regard to the Deity whom he disparages, than to stun him
" with abuse, heap shame and ignominy on his character, and
" perhaps prove his ruin? It is a widely different case when
" such a man is offensively licentious or blasphemous in public,
" when he sets a bad example to the community he belongs to,
" by proceedings subversive of morality, decency, and social
" order; then he steps out of this class, enters the first, and
" his conduct becomes cognizable to the magistrate, who, if he
" find him guilty, is to punish him for what he has been doing,
" but not for what he has been thinking. After the most sedu-

"lous search in the Talmud, and in the whole range of philosophical and ethical learning, I have not been able to find a single passage to justify sovereigns and governments in persecuting sectarians or dissenters from the established religion. "If these dissenters are occasionally in the wrong, they are not wilfully so. The Creator implanted in them, as in all men, a longing after knowledge and perfection; they suppose themselves to be in the path of truth;—if they swerve from it in the integrity of their hearts, is that a sufficient reason for hatred and persecution? Beware then, brethren, of judging uncharitably of your neighbours; desist from dealing out anathema and excommunication on him who falls inadvertently. "Rather draw him unto you with mild words and gentle persuasion. Forbid him not your meetings; let not the doors of assemblies and places of worship be shut to him when he comes to pour out his heart before his Maker. If ye do, if ye cast him off, and consider him as a stranger, ye cut off the return to repentance; the guilt is yours, he is doubly innocent. The house of God should be accessible to all; it is properly the abode of universal love, and peace should encompass it; let, then, every mortal enter it, and adore the Supreme Being as his individual feelings guide him. Moreover, king Solomon prayed, 'concerning a stranger that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake, &c. When he shall come and pray towards this house, hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for.' 1 Kings viii. 43. And ye, esteemed Christians, eminent for wisdom and learning, if it be your wish to promote peace and brotherly love amongst mankind, do not countenance with the force of your intellect the sway of one man over the religious opinions of another. God alone searches the heart, and knows our secret thoughts. We are but of yesterday, and know nothing. Shew me a single instance in our holy law,

" where it gives man a correctional jurisdiction over the thoughts
" and opinions of others. Our Rabbinical doctors ordain that
" sacrifices are to be accepted of the transgressors of Israel,
" to give them a chance of repentance. Do not deem it wise
" to rule the people with a rod of iron. Leave supremacy to
" God, and love each other like brethren," &c. &c.

During the same year in which Mendlessohn published the above, an anonymous work appeared, entitled "Search after Light and Right," in which Mendlessohn was attacked on account of his sentiments thus expressed on ecclesiastical power, which the author pronounces as diametrically opposite to the Mosaic law, which ordains stripes for disobedience, and curses on scepticism. This induced Mendlessohn to declare again his full opinion of religion and toleration, and in 1787 he published "Jerusalem," or "Ecclesiastical Authority and Judaism," where he says he once for all declares his sentiments on theological matters, by which he intends to abide as long as he should live.

In the first section he defines, on the principles of the social compact, the extent of the church's authority as vested in elders over such members of it as dissent from its fundamental doctrines, and inquires whether they have a right in such cases to inflict anathema or excommunication. His answer to this question, deduced by a long series of argument, is, that according to reason, which is a divine voice in all, neither the state nor church are qualified to assume in theological matters any part but that of instructing, any power but that of persuading, any discipline but that of reason and principle, which may be otherwise expressed by saying, that the assenting or not assenting of any individual to certain immutable truths, neither gives him or takes from him any right or qualification to command other men's minds at his own pleasure.

He proceeds in the second section to say, that these conclusions of his had excited alarm for the foundations of eccl-

siaistical law, but that none of his opponents had attempted to controvert his arguments, or to demonstrate the least necessary connexion between doctrine and privilege. "They have all," he says, "started with the *petitio principii*, that there is such "a thing as 'Jus sacro sancto,' while they model it each in his "own way, and, as it were, take different means of determining "the latitude and longitude of a metcor which they all assume "to be visible. Thus they oppose to my arguments the sacred "authority of the Mosaic religion which I profess, and exclaim, "What arè the laws of Moses but a system of religious go- "vernment, and of the power and rights of religion? Now "here is involved an erroneous opinion of Judaism. Judaism "knows nothing of a revealed religion in the sense in which "it is taken by Christians, as enjoining belief in dogmas and "immutable truths, which admit of being demonstrated and "warranted by human faculties. These the Lord has chosen "to reveal to us (*the Jews*) by nature and events, but never "in words or written characters. All the Israelites had was "a divine legislation, i. e. laws, rules of life, and lessons how "to conduct themselves in order to attain temporal and spiritual "happiness, but no obligations of abstract religious belief where- "by one man could be entitled to sit in judgment on the reli- "gious creed of another. This distinction has been little minded; "supernatural legislation has been mistaken for supernatural "revelation, and Judaism has been considered by Christians as "a sort of earlier revelation of religious propositions and tenets "necessary for the salvation of man. We call such truths im- "mutable or eternal as are not subject to time, but continue "the same to all eternity. They are either necessary, immu- "table in and of themselves, or casual; that is, their perpe- "tuity is founded either on their nature, and they are true so, "and not otherwise, because they are cogitable so, and not "otherwise; or on their reality, when they are generally true, "i. e. when they are so, and not otherwise, because they be-

" come real so, and not otherwise, because of all the possible
" truths of their kind they are the best so, and not otherwise.
" In other words, necessary as well as casual truths flow from
" a common source, from the fountain-head of all truth; the
" former from reason, the latter from the will of God. The
" propositions of necessary truths are true, because God con-
" ceives them so, and not otherwise; and those of casual truths
" are true, because God deemed them good, and considered
" them to be in conformity with his wisdom so, and not other-
" wise. The propositions of pure mathematics and logic are
" examples of the former kind; the general propositions of
" natural philosophy, pneumatology, and the laws of nature, by
" which the universe, the material and spiritual worlds are go-
" verned, are examples of the latter. The former are immutable
" even to omnipotence, because God himself cannot make his
" infinite wisdom mutable; the latter, on the contrary, are
" subordinate to the will of God, and are immutable only so
" far as it pleases his holy will; that is, so far as they answer
" his purposes. His omnipotence might introduce other laws
" instead of them, and may let exceptions take place, when-
" ever they are of utility.

" Besides those eternal truths, there are also temporal or
" historical truths; things which did occur at one time, and,
" perhaps, will never occur again; propositions which, through
" a confluence of causes and effects, have become true in one
" point and space of time, and which, therefore, can be con-
" ceived as true in respect to that point of space and time only.
" All historical truths, in their widest extent, are of this kind—
" things of remote ages, which did once take place, and are
" narrated to us, but which we ourselves can never observe.

" These classes of truths and propositions differ no less in
" their nature than in respect to their means of evidence; that
" is, the mode and process by which men convince themselves
" and others of them.

"The doctrines of the first class, or that of necessary truths, are founded on reason, that is, on an unalterable coherency and real connexion of ideas, in virtue of which they either presuppose or preclude one another. All mathematical and logical demonstrations are of that kind. They all shew the possibility or impossibility of associating certain ideas in the mind. He who would instruct his fellow-men in them, must not recommend them to his belief, but, as it were, force them upon his understanding; he must not cite authorities, and appeal to the trustworthiness of men, who maintained exactly the same thing, but he must analyse the ideas in all their distinguishing characteristics, and continue to hold them up to his pupil, one by one, until his internal sense perceives their junctures and connexion. We cannot, as Socrates justly observes, put anything into his mind, which it does not actually contain already; but we may facilitate the labour it would cost him to bring to light what is hidden, that is, to render the unperceived perceptible and obvious.

"The truths of the second class require, beside reason, observation as well. If we would know the laws which the Creator has prescribed to his creation, and by what general rules the mutations therein take place, we must experience, observe, and make experiments on single cases; that is, we must, in the first place, make use of the evidence of the senses; and next, educate by means of reason, out of sundry single cases, what they have in common. In doing so we shall indeed be obliged to trust in many things to the faith and credit of others. Our natural life does not last long enough for us to experience everything ourselves; and we are, in many cases, necessitated to rely on credible fellow-men, and to suppose the correctness of their experience, and of the experiments they pretend to have made. But we confide in them only as far as we know, and are certain that the objects themselves still exist, and that the experiments

" and observations may be repeated thereon, and put to the
" test, by ourselves, or by those who have the opportunity and
" the requisite skill. Nay, when the result becomes of impor-
" tance, and has a material influence on our own happiness, or on
" that of others, we are far from being satisfied with the report
" of even the most creditable witnesses, who state to us their
" observations and experiments, but seek an opportunity to
" repeat them ourselves, and to become convinced of them by
" their internal evidence. Historical truths, on the contrary, or
" those passages which as it were occur but once in the book
" of nature, must either explain themselves, or remain unintel-
" ligible; i. e. they can be observed by means of the senses
" only by those who are present at the time when, and at the
" place where, they happened; every one else can only take
" them on authority and testimonials; while those who live at a
" subsequent period must absolutely depend on the authenticity
" of the testimonials; for the thing testified of no longer
" exists. The object itself, and the direct inspection thereof, to
" which perhaps an appeal would be made, are no longer found
" in nature. The senses cannot convince themselves of the
" truth. In historical matters, the narrator's reputation and
" his credibility constitute the only evidence. We cannot be
" persuaded of any historical fact unless by testimony. Were
" it not for authority, the truth of history would vanish along
" with the events themselves.

" Now whenever it suits with God's design that mankind
" should be satisfied of any truth, his wisdom also affords them
" the aptest means to arrive at it. If it be a necessary truth,
" he grants them the degree of judgment which it requires. If
" a law of nature is to be promulgated to them, he inspires
" them with the spirit of observation; and if a fact is to be
" preserved to posterity, he confirms its historical certainty,
" and places the narrator's credibility beyond all question. Con-
" sistently with the dignity of supreme wisdom, he instructs

" mankind with respect to truths merely historical in a human
 " manner, i. e. by means of words and writings confirmed by
 " miracles and signs whenever such evidence of their authority
 " or credibility was required. But eternal and necessary truths,
 " on the other hand, so far as they are important to the welfare
 " and happiness of man, God teaches in a manner more suitable
 " to the Godhead; not by words or written characters, which
 " may be intelligible here and there, and to this or that man,
 " but by creation itself, and its internal relations, which are
 " legible and intelligible every where and to all men. Nor
 " does he certify them by signs and miracles, which affect only
 " historical belief; but he stirs the mind created by him, and
 " affords it an opportunity to observe those relations of things,
 " to observe its own self, and to become persuaded of the truths
 " of which it is destined to acquire a knowledge here on earth.
 " I therefore do not believe, that the resources of human rea-
 " soning are inadequate to the persuading of mankind of the
 " eternal truths requisite for their happiness; and that God
 " had need to reveal them to them in a preternatural manner.
 " They who maintain this, deny to the omnipotence or the good-
 " ness of God in one way that which, in another way, they
 " imagine they are attributing to his goodness. He was, in
 " their opinion, good enough to reveal to mankind the truths
 " on which their happiness depends; but he was neither om-
 "nipotent nor good enough to grant to them the faculties of
 " discovering them themselves.

" Accordingly we find that Judaism boasts of no exclusive
 " revelation of immutable truths indispensable to salvation—of
 " no revealed religion in the sense in which that term is ge-
 "nerally taken. A revealed religion is one thing, a revealed
 " legislation is another. The voice which was heard on mount
 " Sinai did not say, 'I am the Lord your God, the eternal,
 " self-existing Being, omnipotent and omniscient, who rewards
 " men in a future life according to their works.' All this is

" the universal religion of mankind, without which they can be
" neither virtuous nor saved, and was not to be revealed only
" then and there. All this was supposed to be already known,
" or, perhaps, was taught, and explained by human reasoning,
" and placed beyond all doubt, during the days of preparation.
" But the divine voice said, 'I am the Lord thy God, who brought
" thee out of the land of Egypt; who delivered thee from
" bondage. &c.;' thus announcing an historical fact on which
" the legislation of that particular people was to be founded,
" since laws were to be revealed there, commandments and
" judgments, but no immutable theological truths. 'I am the
" Lord your God, who made a covenant with your forefathers,
" Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and swore to them to form out
" of their seed a nation of my own. The time has at last
" arrived when that promise is to be fulfilled. For that pur-
" pose I delivered you from the bondage of the Egyptians. I
" delivered you from it amidst unheard-of miracles and signs.
" I am your deliverer, your chief, your king; I even make a
" covenant with you, and give you laws, after which you shall
" live, and become a happy nation in the land which I shall
" put you in possession of: all these are historical truths,
" from their nature resting on historical evidence, which must
" be attested by authority, and may be corroborated by mira-
" cles. According to Judaism, miracles and extraordinary signs
" are no evidence either for or against immutable self-evident
" truths. Hence the Scripture itself directs, that if a prophet
" teach or counsel things which are contrary to decided truths,
" we are not to hearken to him, even if he confirm his legation
" by miracles: nay, if he seek to entice to idolatry, we are
" to put the wonder-doer to death. For miracles can only
" attest depositions, support authority, and confirm the credi-
" bility of witnesses; but all depositions and authorities together
" cannot subvert a decidedly self-evident truth, nor yet place
" a questionable one above doubt and suspicion.

“ Now, although that divine book, which we have received
“ through Moses, is supposed to be properly a code of law, and
“ to contain judgments, rules of life, and precepts, yet it is well
“ known to include withal an inscrutable treasure of self-evident
“ truths and theological dogmas, which are so identified with
“ the laws as to form but one whole with them. All the laws
“ are referrible to, or are founded on, immutable self-evident
“ truths, or put one in mind of, and cause one to ponder on
“ them: hence our Rabbins justly observe, that the laws and
“ dogmas stand in the same relation to each other as the body
“ does to the soul. All those excellent theorems are, never-
“ theless, presented to knowledge and proposed for meditation,
“ without being forced upon belief. There is not, amongst all
“ the precepts and tenets of the Mosaic law, a single one which
“ says, ‘Thou shalt believe this,’ or, ‘Thou shalt not believe
“ it,’ but they all say, ‘Thou shalt do,’ or, ‘Thou shalt forbear.’
“ There faith is not commanded; for faith takes no commands
“ but what get to it by the road of conviction. All the com-
“ mandments of the Mosaic law are addressed to the will of
“ man, and to his acting faculty. Nay, the word in the original
“ language, which is usually translated ‘to believe,’ in most
“ cases, properly means, ‘to trust in,’ ‘to rely on,’ ‘to have
“ full confidence in what is promised or caused to be expected.’
“ ‘Abraham trusted the Lord, and it was counted to him for
“ piety.’ Gen. xv. 6. ‘The Israelites saw, and had confidence
“ in the Lord, and in his servant Moses.’ Exod. xiv. 31. Where-
“ ever the question is of eternal self-evident truth, there is
“ nothing said of believing, but understanding and knowing.
“ ‘Know, therefore, this day, and consider it in thine heart,
“ that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and in the earth
“ beneath; there is none else.’ Deut. iv. 39. ‘Hear, O Israel:
“ the Lord our God is one.’ Deut. iv. 4. In no place is it
“ said, ‘Believe, O Israel, and thou shalt be blessed; forbear
“ doubting, O Israel, or this or that punishment shall betide

"thee.' Commandments and prohibitions, rewards and punishments, are for actions only, for life and morals; all which depend on man's will and pleasure, and are governed by notions of good and evil, and therefore, also, by hope and fear. Belief and doubt, assent and dissent, on the contrary, are not to be regulated by our volition—not by wishes and desires, not by fear and hope; but by our discernment of truth or untruth. For this reason, too, ancient Judaism has no symbolical books, no articles of faith. No one needed be sworn to symbols, to subscribe to articles of faith. Nay, we have not as much as a conception of what is called 'oaths of creed'; and, according to the spirit of true Judaism, must hold them inadmissible. That eminent teacher of the nation, Hillel the elder, who lived before the destruction of the second temple, reduced and comprehended the whole law in one practical precept. 'Rabbi,' said a Pagan to him, 'wilt thou teach me the whole law while I am standing on one leg?' Shammai, to whom he had made the same proposal before, dismissed him with contempt; but Hillel, celebrated for his imperturbable temper and his mildness, said, 'Son, love thy neighbour as thyself. This is the text of the law; all the rest is commentary. Now go thy ways, and study'."

Farther on in the work he says, "Judaism consists, or, according to the founder's design, was to consist of,

"1st. Religious dogmas and propositions of immutable truths of God, of his government and providence, without which man can neither be enlightened nor happy. These were not forced on the belief of the people, by threats of eternal or temporal punishment, but, suitably to the nature and evidence of immutable truths, recommended for rational consideration. They needed not be suggested by direct revelation, or promulgated by words or writing, which are understood only in this or that place, at this or that time. The Supreme Being revealed them to all rational beings by

" events and by ideas, and inscribed them in their soul, in a
 " character legible and intelligible at all times, and in all places.
 " Hence sings the Psalmist: 'The heavens tell the glory of God;
 " and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. One day telleth
 " this unto another, and night therein instructeth night. It is
 " not a lesson and discourse whose sound is not heard; its chord
 " rings through the entire globe; its words penetrate to the
 " extremes of the inhabited world, where he set a tabernacle
 " for the sun, &c.' Ps. xix. 1. Their effect is as universal as
 " the salutary influence of the sun, which, while revolving round
 " its orbit, diffuses light and heat over the whole globe, as the
 " same bard still more distinctly declares; in another place:
 " 'From where the sun rises to where it sets the name of
 " the Lord is praised;' or, as the prophet Malachi says in
 " the name of the Lord: 'From where the sun rises to where
 " it sets my name is great among the Gentiles; and in all
 " places, incense, sacrifice, and pure meat-offerings, are offered
 " unto my name; for my name is great among the heathen.'

" 2ndly. Historical truths, or accounts of the occurrences of
 " the primitive world, especially memoirs of the lives of the
 " first ancestors of the nation, of their knowledge of the true
 " God, even of their failings, and the paternal correction im-
 " mediately following thereon, of the covenant which God
 " entered into with them, and his frequent promise to make
 " of their descendants a nation dedicated to himself. These
 " historical truths contain the ground-work of the national
 " union; and, as historical truths, they cannot, according to
 " their nature, be received otherwise than on trust: authority
 " alone gives them the necessary evidence. And they were,
 " moreover, confirmed to the nation by miracles, and supported
 " by an authority which sufficed to place faith beyond all doubt
 " and hesitation.

" 3rdly. Laws, judgments, commandments, rules of life, which
 " were to be peculiar to that nation, and by observing which

" it was to arrive at national—as well as every single member thereof, at individual—happiness. The lawgiver was God himself; God, not in his relations as Creator and Preserver of the universe—but God, as Lord Protector and ally of their forefathers; as the liberator, founder, and leader, as the king and ruler of that people. And he gave the laws a sanction, than which nothing could be more solemn; he gave them publicly, and in a marvellous manner never before heard of, whereby they were imposed on the nation and on their descendants for ever, as an unalterable duty and obligation.

" As directions to general practice, and rules of conduct, the ceremonial law was the bond for uniting practice with speculation, conduct with doctrine. They lead inquiring reason to divine truths; partly to eternal, partly to historical truths, on which the religion of that nation was founded. Under that polity, state and religion were not united, but one; not allied, but identical. The relations of man to society, and the relations of man to God, converged into one point, and could never come in collision. Hence civil life amongst that nation assumed a holy and religious cast, and every service to the public was, at the same time, true divine service. The congregation was a congregation of the Lord; their concerns were the Lord's; the public taxes were heavy offerings to the Lord; and, to the least measures and regulations for the public safety, everything was religious. The Levites, who lived on the public revenue, received their maintenance of the Lord. They were to have no part or inheritance in the land; for the Lord is their inheritance. As to offences, every offence against the authority of God, the lawgiver of the nation, was an offence against majesty, and therefore, a political or state offence. He who reviled God committed high treason; he who wickedly broke the sabbath, abrogated, as far as lay with him, a fundamental law of civil society; for on the institution of that day rested a material

" part of the polity. 'The sabbath shall be an eternal covenant between me and the children of Israel,' says the Lord, "'a perpetual sign, that in six days, &c.' Exod. xxxi. Therefore under that polity those offences could, nay must, be punished civilly, not as false opinions, not as disbelief, but as misdeeds, as contumacious political offences, which aim at the abolishing, or at least at weakening, the lawgiver's authority, and thereby undermining the state itself. It was not disbelief, not false doctrine or error, that was punished; but contumacious offences against the majesty of the lawgiver, daring misdeeds against the fundamental laws of the state and the civil government; and it was punished only then, when the crime, in licentiousness, exceeded all bounds, and was approaching to rebellion; when the offender did not mind having the law quoted to him by two fellow-citizens, and being threatened by them with the regular punishment, nay, even took the punishment upon himself and committed the offence in their sight. This was tantamount to high treason, and the religious reprobate became a state criminal. Besides, the Talmudic doctors expressly declare, that ever since the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, corporeal and capital punishment, nay, all fines, so far as they were merely national, ceased to be legal. Now this perfectly accords with my principles, and cannot be explained except on them. The civil bonds of the nation being dissolved, religious infractions no longer constituted state offences; and religion, as such, knows of no punishment, of no penance, but what a repentant sinner voluntarily imposes upon himself. It disclaims all coercion, smites with the wand of 'gentleness' only; and acts only on the mind and on the heart. Let them try to explain rationally the above Talmudic assertion any other way than on my principles."

I have submitted to the reader these long extracts from Mendelssohn's most controverted writings in order that he may be enabled to form an intelligent judgment on a suspicion which

has been entertained, as I think, most unreasonably, that their author was a Sceptical Jew, that is, one who, while he professes the religion of Judaism, undervalues or calls in question the authority and inspiration of the canonical Hebrew Scriptures, as several of the school called Neologian have recently done. That he should be found to vindicate himself from such suspicion is so far important to the favourable reception of this Volume, as, if unremoved, it would lead cautious persons to distrust as an interpreter of the Bible the commentator whose suggestions have been most frequently adopted in the following Version of Ecclesiastes. I cannot doubt however that after the perusal of these extracts it will be allowed by the most cautious, that while he was a man of the most vigorous and independent thought, his exercise of it was ever under the wholesome restraint of the profoundest veneration for the venerable creed and institutions of his ancestors, though it be true that he differed from some of his brethren as to the origin and sanction of certain portions of that creed, considering that they are disclosed to all men alike by events and by ideas implanted in the human mind, and that they neither needed to be nor are promulgated in the Pentateuch, and by peculiar revelation to the Jews.

I shall conclude the above notice of his life with stating, that his unwearied application to literature never forsook him. One of the most important of his works, besides those which I have mentioned, was the "Phædon," or "On the Immortality of the Soul." The catalogue of them is of considerable length. Though remarkable for the most rigid abstemiousness, he was very fond of company, and excelled in a playful and harmless satire. He died in the year 1786. It has been pronounced of him by those best acquainted with his writings, that "while he would have been an ornament to any nation, he was unrivalled in his own."

The following is a translation from the Rabbinic Hebrew of the Preface to his Commentary on Ecclesiastes, a production of a somewhat difficult and recondite description, but sufficiently curious and valuable to merit the attention of the reader.

THE PREFACE OF R. MOSES MENDLESSOHN.

THE commentaries on our Holy Law, as is well known, follow four different methods, viz. those of simple, recondite, allegorical, and mysterious interpretation¹. Now these four sorts of commentary are all to be regarded like the words of the living God, as all right and compatible one with another; nor is the fact of their being so contrary to good sense or analogy, or strange or surprizing to the human understanding, as I shall explain by the help of the Lord.

Now every discourse has a meaning agreeable to all the purposes of the speaker and hearer, and corresponding exactly with the succession and connexion of the things said, without exceeding or falling short of them; and this is called its primary meaning, and the exposition of this meaning is called טַבְשׁ. And with respect to this primary meaning our Rabbins said, "No passage of Scripture goes beyond its primary meaning."² The method of the בִּשְׁתָּה, or exposition of the primary meaning, is to notice the meaning and not the words used in expressing it. Now as to sense, there is no difference between זֶבַר and שְׁמַר; or again, between פְּחֻמֹּד and לֹא תִתְאַפֵּה³; for what is intended by them according to their primary meaning is in

¹ They are called in Hebrew סָדָר דָּרְשׁ בִּשְׁתָּה and פִּשְׁט.

² אֵין מִכְרָא יוֹצֵא מִדִּי פְּשָׁטוֹ, i. e. it exactly corresponds to it, and the text is always of the right length, and no more, to express it.

³ These words occur in the corresponding accounts of the delivery of the law, to express corresponding ideas, in the part of Exodus called by the Jews the "section Jethro," (i. e. several chapters, of which the 20th is one), and in Deuteronomy.

itself only one sense, as Rabbi Abraham Aben Ezra has explained at section Jethro. Now any one in conversation¹ is at liberty to employ synonymous terms or phrases, similar in sense, as he may think proper; and though in fact each of the synonymous nouns has its own peculiar shade of meaning which distinguishes it from its cognate word, so much so that two nouns will not be found expressing exactly the same thing, without any difference in force or want of force, or distinction in respect of modification of expression, and much less any two phrases be found entirely similar in signification; still sometimes this distinction is exceedingly small, so that with respect to the sense there is no use or importance in it, or it would be troublesome to the speaker or hearer to look to every single word in order to determine whether such an one would be more agreeable to the sense according to that subtle consideration; and then the speaker will employ either of the two synonymous words or phrases without discrimination, and with freedom and ease of speech; and thus sometimes they are employed for the elegancies of poetry, either for repeating the same meaning in different words after the manner of writers of songs, or in case the nature of the style should require the same subject to be mentioned two or three times, when it is for the beauty of the poetry to express it in different words, as is known to every beginner in the art of poetry and song. In short, the natural speaker for the most part considers the sense of what he says, and not the words he uses: and so it is with a prophet or one who speaks by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. His first intention regards the sense with peculiar care, and arranges the words according to the beauty of language, and the elegancies of poetry and song, without appropriating a particular meaning or thing signified to each of all the varieties of expression.

But when the natural and human speaker discriminates and weighs the signification of each separate word in the scales of

¹ Literally, “master of a tongue.”

correctness, and without any licence, then he employs each of the words or phrases of similar meaning, and not its cognate word which resembles it in grammatical form and sense, not by chance or accident, or even by way of ornament or elegance, but to indicate and point out by means of it a particular meaning which he does not choose, or which it would not be right to explain with the full interpretation², either for the sake of brevity, or for some other reason; and the thing signified by that refinement will be a sort of secondary meaning. And this the speaker intends to be taken not by itself, or as the primary meaning, but merely as a piece of subtlety and ingenuity³. As an instance of this, Judah said to Joseph, "Thou art as Pharaoh." Yarchi⁴ interprets it thus, "Thou art accounted as a king in my eyes." This is its פשט or simple interpretation, and its מורה or recondite interpretation is, "Thy end may be that thou mayest be smitten for him⁵ with leprosy, as Pharaoh was on account of Sarah thy grandmother, &c." The first method is called the simple method of interpreting it, or its פשט; and it was clearly the primary meaning of the speaker, as appears from the connexion of the preceding and following events; since it was in fact the intention of Judah to plead with the lord of the land, but in fear and submission,

² הַמִּבְנָה is here used adverbially.

³ Observe that Mendelssohn does not praise this or other absurdities which he quotes; he merely mentions them as specimens of the various kinds of commentary, the רמן פשט &c.

⁴ This is the name by which that distinguished commentator is usually known, and we have, therefore, adopted it in this place and elsewhere; but Wolfe has shown in his Bib. Rabb. that "רשׁ" is properly a contraction for רְבֵן שְׁלֹמֹה בֶן יִצְחָק Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, and that the name Yarchi has crept in no one knows how, in the course of ages. Buxtorf says, "רשׁ" is put for יִרְחָי which is wrong. For a short notice of his life, vid. p. 38, supra.

⁵ Benjamin.

as would be consistent with prudence and wisdom for a stranger in a strange land, not to speak harshly with him or provoke him, and consequently, it is evident that he meant to praise him in saying of him, “Thou art as Pharaoh;” but since he has expressed his words indefinitely, and has not said plainly, “Thou art a great prince, or regarded in my eyes as a king,” it would seem that the secondary meaning was to warn him, that even if he was of equal account with Pharaoh, he was not better than he, and that it was quite possible he might be plagued as Pharaoh was; and such is the way of the intelligent man, to moderate his expressions¹ before kings and great men of the earth, when he wishes to reprove them to their face, or to say before them a thing which will be unpleasing in their eyes. He cloaks his words under the cover of praise and flattery, and the wise ruler will apprehend their secondary meaning, and lay it to heart. Now there is no doubt that Judah said this to Joseph after the manner of a natural and human speaker, but that he nevertheless hinted at the secondary meaning, which is very much in agreement with the business in which he was engaged; but with respect to the connexion and succession of the events, we see that this was not the primary meaning.

Now as for him who speaks by prophecy or by the Holy Spirit, there is no doubt that nothing ever occurs in his discourse without its peculiar meaning, and if he chooses one of similar words or phrases, that he has some wish or purpose in so doing with regard to the sense, and consequently not only observes their meanings, but also the similarity and interchange which exists between them; and that all the changes of phrase, whether great or small, refer to a secondary meaning, even though that sometimes be remote from the primary meaning; and the interpretation of this secondary meaning is called **درש** or recondite interpretation. An instance of this we have with regard to the words זכר and שמר and again תתואה

¹ For the phrase לבלבל דבריו vid. Ps. cxii. 5.

and תחמוד, though according to the first meaning the thing signified by them be the same, still there can be no doubt that in the discourses of the great God, this change cannot occur by accident or chance, as we explained that it may in human speech, because Supreme Wisdom does nothing without a useful object and purpose; and again, we cannot attribute this change to beauty of poetry, since the intention of altering the expressions in Deuteronomy from what they were in Exodus, (section Jethro), was not to give sweetness of expression to the poetry by a change of words, and consequently it is evident that all this was for a peculiar purpose and meaning, viz. to raise the well-instructed and intelligent person to the meaning which they explain² minutely by one of the methods of recondite interpretation received among our nation; and consequently our wise men of blessed memory have done well in that they have commented reconditely according to these methods on the alteration and interchange between the first expressions and the latter, and all their words are true. Though the rule which Aben Ezra mentions be also true, that the Hebrew observes the sense and not the words; for the Rabbi spoke there only with reference to the primary meaning as we have described it, and you will find that our wise men themselves too sometimes mentioned the recondite interpretation, and afterwards asked פשטי דקרא במאי כתיב “The simple interpretation of the text, how does that run?” as is seen in many places of the Talmud³. And consequently we see clearly that our wise men did not reject the simple interpretation and primary meaning which neglects the words and only observes the sense, although they took care also to notice the secondary meaning,

² i. e. is explained.

³ He calls the Talmud חמשה סדרים sex ordines vel partes operis Talmudici, i. e. the five ^{בְּזִקְנָתָם}, נְשָׁמָם, מַזְעֵד, זְרֻעִים and טהרוֹת.

which refinedly treats on every word and letter, or even horn of a letter¹. For among the words of the living God nothing occurs accidentally, or without a meaning, just as he has created nothing in his world without a particular purpose, as is seen clearly by every intelligent person.

Now the distinguishing mark of the secondary meaning is, that the thing signified in it is not in accordance in every respect with all the intentions of the speaker and hearer, or with the whole connexion of the passage and its union with what precedes and follows. And sometimes the writer of recondite interpretation pays no regard or attention except to the phrase he is actually engaged with, and seeks a secondary meaning for it according to the customary methods by which the law is reconditely interpreted, although this meaning be not in accordance with the passages preceding and following, as it should be. And so you will find for the most part in the recondite commentaries of our sages, that they did not interpret by means of them the connexion of the verses, and their arrangement one after another, but wrote recondite commentaries on every single phrase by itself, and sought a secondary meaning in them; and the fact that there is no connexion or agreement between them, is not at all at variance with the method of the secondary meaning, as is known to every scholar.

¹ The horns of letters are the little corners which give them a finished appearance, as in the top of the letter ב. Buxtorf mentions the following curious passage on this subject. We give his words as they stand. In the Talmud. Menach. fol. 29, ii. בשעה שעלה משה לארון למלרום מצאו להקב"ה שושב וקתר כתרים לאוותית &c. i. e. Quo tempore ascendit Moses in altum invenit Deum sedentem et ligantem coronas ad literas (i. e. apices quibusdam literis inscribentem) et dixit ei, "Domine mundi, quis retardat manum tuam?" respondet Deus, "Homo quidam qui venturus est post multa secula, nomine Akiva ben Joseph, qui commentaturus est super unumquenque apicem litterarum infinitos cumulos interpretationum." These are the κερααι "titles" mentioned in Matt. v. 18.

And accordingly you will see that Yarchi, the light of the captivity, who has proceeded in his commentary on the Bible² on the method of recondite interpretation, sometimes has explained each passage of scripture according to a sense separate and distinct from that of the passage which is next to it in place, without any connexion or union between them, as there ought to be according to the first meaning.

Now if the sense, as developed by the method of recondite interpretation, be derived from observation, not of the words and phrases in the way that we have described, but of beginnings and endings of words, their combination, their numerical value, and the points over the letters; and in short, if the meaning is reconditely interpreted from observation of the letters and points, that method of commentary is called רמנּוּם בְּהַבְּרָאָם Gen. ii. 4³, (where the letter ח is written small), and they interpret this word, “he created them by the letter ח of his holy name יְהֹוָה.” Again, at the passage in Gen. xxxii. 4, “דָבַר נָרְתִּי” I have sojourned with Laban,” Yarchi remarks, “דָבַר נָרְתִּי בְּנִימְטְרִיא תְּרִיגּ” כֹּלֶם עַם לְבָנֵנוּ וְתְּרִיגּ מִצְחָת שְׁמָרְתִּי וְלֹא בְּנִימְטְרִיא תְּרִיגּ” i.e. the word נָרְתִּי is used after מִצְחָת מְמֻשְׁיוֹ הדָעִים “the method of or transposition of the same set of letters, and becomes therefrom תְּרִיגּ, and the meaning of the passage is, “I have sojourned with Laban, and kept

² Literally, “law, prophets, and Hagiographa.”

³ “In their being created.”

⁴ Or, “according to the letter ח,” which is made up of separate lines, to indicate that the heavens and earth are only composed of parts which will be dissolved and diminished, as is further denoted by the small size of the letter. They also remark, with respect to the צִירָף, or combination of letters in this word, that the same letters also spell בְּאַבְרָהָם, to denote that the world was created for the faithful, who alone see the glories of God in creation. The word צִירָף is thus explained by Buxtorf: “Apud Cabalistas combinatio literarum est quarum æqualibus numeris vel mutua permutatione aliquid occulte et mystice significatur.”

the 613 commandments, and have not learnt any of his evil practices¹."

And sometimes, when the sense of the or allegorical commentary is a mysterious and wonderful one, it is proper to conceal and hide it from the multitude, and not to reveal it,

¹ The Jews held, that this was the number of commandments obligatory upon them, vid. a note to Mr Bernard's Maimonides. Mr Bernard says, "The Rabbins count in the Mosaic law 613 commandments, 248 of which they call מצוות עשה positive commandments, and 365 מצוות לא תעשה negative commandments. Thus they say, מצוות נאמרו לו למשה בסיני, ש"סיה לאוין, כמנין ימות החמה תרי"ג, 613 commandments have been enjoined to Moses in Sinai; 365 negative (commandments) according to the number of the days of the year, and 248 positive (commandments) corresponding to the (number of) the limbs of a man." Mendlessohn says, in his Jerusalem: "Ancient Judaism has no articles of faith. No one needed to be sworn to symbols, to subscribe articles of faith. Nay, we have not so much as a conception of what are called 'oaths of creed'; and according to the spirit of true Judaism we must hold them inadmissible. It was Maimonides who first conceived the thought of limiting the religion of his forefathers to a certain number of principles, 'in order,' says he, 'that religion, like all sciences, may have its fundamental ideas, from which all the rest may be deduced.' But he (Mendlessohn) here refers to the 13 articles of the Jewish Catechism, which answer to our 39 articles, and not to the 613 commandments mentioned above, which the Rabbins had counted up in the Mosaic law, long before these articles of faith were drawn up. Those 613 were commandments relating to practice, and not to belief."

Buxtorf, at the word גמטריא Geometria, has the following remarks: Geometria est Cabala species quâ ex diversarum vocum æquali numero eundem sensum colligunt; verbum ortum videtur ex Græco γεωμετρίᾳ vel potius συμμετρίᾳ. Sic ex illis verbis, "Ecce ego adducaturus sum servum meum צמח (Germen) Zach. iii. 8, colligunt per צמח intelligendum esse Messiam, qui debebat appellari מנוח consolator, juxta illud 'Longe recessit a me מנוח' in Threnis, i. e. consolator aut Messias, ut idem Talmude explicatur (vid. Sanhedrim, fol. 98). Jam literæ vocis צמח in numero valent 138, totidem etiam

except to the choicest among men, and then it is called **סָדֶךְ**. And since we see from the many instances of Supreme Wisdom's intending one work for many purposes, that this may be set down as an attribute of Supreme Wisdom in general², and we see in the works of creation in general, and in the limbs of living creatures in detail, that their Creator has intended each limb for several different purposes; for instance, he has made the nose for smelling, for breathing, for discharging the superfluous humour of the eyes, and to ornament the form of the face; and he has made the air for the living creatures to breathe, to convey the voice, for the blowing of the wind, for

vocis **מִנְחָם**. Cum itaque Propheta dixit, ‘Adducam servum meum **מִנְחָם**’ perinde est ac dixisset servum meum **מִנְחָם** Messiam;” (so Aben Ezra and Kimchi on Zechariah iii. 8.) (Observe that the Hebrew method of notation is merely the addition as they stand of the numbers denoted by the separate letters, beginning at either end, because they have no scale of notation; thus, “תריינ = $3 + 10 + 200 + 400 = 613$, and צמָח = $8 + 40 + 90 = 138$, and **מִנְחָם** = $40 + 8 + 50 + 40 = 138$, the letters having no local value). Again, in Gen. xxv. 21, וַיַּעֲשֵׂר רֵבֶkaה אֲשֶׁתָּו and “Rebekah his wife conceived,” or “Rebekah conceived **אֲשֶׁתָּו**” Now **אֲשֶׁתָּו** = $6 + 400 + 300 + 1 = 707$, and **שָׂעָר** = $300 + 100 + 6 + 300 + 1 = 707$. So that **אֲשֶׁתָּו** is equivalent to **שָׂעָר** **שָׂעָר** fire and stubble, i. e. Jacob and Esau, as we find in Obad. 18, “בֵּית יַעֲקֹב אֵשׁ וְבֵית עֵשֶׂן לְקָרֵב.” “The house of Jacob shall be fire, and the house of Esau stubble.” Again, in Gen. xi. 1, “And all the earth was of one speech,” שָׁפָה אֶחָת. Now **לְשׁוֹן הַקְּרָשָׁה** אֶחָת = $400 + 8 + 1 + 5 + 80 + 300 = 794$, and **לְשׁוֹן הַקְּרָשָׁה** = $300 + 4 + 100 + 5 + 50 + 6 + 300 + 30 = 795$. The Rabbins make these two numbers the same (how I cannot presume to say), and draw from thence an equivalence between the “one speech,” of which all the world was before Babel, and the **לְשׁוֹן הַקְּרָשָׁה**, or Hebrew language. Again, Buxtorf says, “מִשְׁיחָה יַבָּא שִׁילָה” veniet Shilo valet 358, quod et **מִשְׁיחָה**”; hence the identity between Shilo and the Messiah is established.

² Literally, “that this defines supreme wisdom.”

the descent of rain and dew, for the ascent of flame, &c.; (observe how he has intended a single thing for many uses, and so various!) such being the case, I say, it is not to be wondered at that the intention of this Supreme Wisdom in one expression should be for many different meanings to be expressed, and all of them true; and so say our sages, “One passage of scripture is to be reconditely interpreted in many senses,” and so they have said in the Zohar, at the text, “Who knoweth the spirit of man? &c.” which it is difficult to understand according to the פשט or simple interpretation. They said, **האי קרא כמה גוונין אית ביה : והכי הוא כל מל דארוייתא** כמה גוונין בכל חד וחד, **וכללו יאות** i.e. “as for this passage, there are many meanings¹ in it, and thus it is with all the words of the law, there are many meanings in every single one of them, and all of them are right and good;” and accordingly they have interpreted this verse in many places in different ways.

And you will understand hereby, how it is proper to explain every expression uttered in prophecy or by inspiration of the Holy Spirit by several methods, viz. the **רמז**, the **פרש**, and the **תסב**, and that all of them agree with the **פשט**, since that is the most necessary of them all; but there is no difference between the truthfulness of the **פשט** and that of the **פרש**, since there is no doubt that everything that proceeds from the lips of him who speaks by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and every single movement of his lips intends a peculiar sense and meaning, and that there is not one unprofitable word among them, just as there will not be found among the works of the Creator a single thing devoid of all purpose or use; and for every one of the fibres of a fly’s wing, or an ant’s foot, there is a particular use, even though human skill would be wearied out with discovering them in detail, as is known to investigators in natural history; and consequently, there is no doubt that in every

¹ Literally, “colours.”

place which our sages have reconditely interpreted according to their usual method, they have not shunned the plain interpretation, or neglected the primary meaning which is agreeable with the connexion of the passages, but that they have seen in their wisdom, that the method of simple interpretation is not sufficient for the purpose of the details of the passage, and the discrimination of them, as we have mentioned.

As for instance; the wise man has said, “A live dog is better off than a dead lion.” You will see in my commentary on this passage by the method of **תשד**, that he here speaks after the opinion of those who deny the immortality of the soul; for according to them the same accidents happen to men and beasts, and the death of the one is as the death of the other; and since the most despised of animals, the dog, is esteemed above the carcase of a lion, the most noble among the beasts of the earth, in the opinion of those infidels the same is the case also with the sons of men, that the most afflicted and impoverished, despised and debased of men, he, I say, is more happy when alive than the most perfect of human kind after death, since that in their opinion is the destruction and annihilation of the soul, and that would be the very height of ignominy and disaster, (see my comment at the place); and consequently this passage is not at variance with what he says, that “The day of one’s death is better than that of one’s birth;” for there he speaks after the opinion of those who possess the true knowledge, who believe in the immortality of the soul, according to whose opinion death is to the righteous a going to real life, and truly desirable felicity, as I shall explain in its place. And as to the objection against the above passage which Rabbi Tenachom, the writer of recondite commentary, (Talmud, Schabbath, fol. xxx. page 1) has drawn from what Solomon himself says, “So that I was ready to praise the dead who are dead already, &c., and as better off than either, him who has not yet been,” that apparently he only said this

agreeably to the opinion of the unbelievers whom I have mentioned¹, and how, he would say, should he, according to their perishable doctrine, praise the dead or him who is not yet born? since according to their doctrine a live dog is better off than a dead lion. Now according to the simple interpretation of these passages they agree together. For such is the character of this perishable doctrine; it perverts the paths of skill and investigation, and brings its professor into great perplexity, till he knows not which to choose, whether life or death; for if he who denies the immortality of the soul, looks at the evil work done under the sun, it is quite likely that he should be disgusted with life, and say that death is better than life, or curse his birth-day as Job did; many evils and distresses alarm him, and he has no comforter; to-morrow he will have to go to his long home, and return to nothingness, as his expectation was nothingness; or if (on the other hand) he lay to heart that there is no greater evil than utter annihilation and destruction, the conviction of good sense will as it were compel him to choose a life of distress and sorrow before the death and destruction of the soul; and so sometimes he will say to himself, "Do all that is in the power of thy hand to do, since there is no judgment and no account;" and sometimes he will be disgusted from doing anything great or small, and will say, "The race is not to the swift, &c." (as is explained in the commentary); and thus his thoughts will trouble him, and sling his soul as in the hollow of a sling from confusion to faintness of heart; and there will be for ever a strife in his mind between the judgment of the understanding and the tumults of nature; and on this account "there is no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked;" for "like a troubled sea their heart cannot rest;" and from this perplexity a man cannot be delivered except by a belief in the immortality of the soul and recompense in the life to come, as I shall explain in its place, and as I have

¹ i. e. as quoting their opinion.

written at length in my book on the Immortality of the Soul². But all this belongs to the plain interpretation of the passage and its primary meaning. But it was not without an especial purpose that he who spake by the Holy Ghost chose the illustration of the dog and the lion; and though it be truly conducive to poetical beauty, it is nevertheless probable that he also intended by it a secondary meaning, after the manner of שׁרֵד, viz. to point out that with respect to cases of the law, they make it lawful to carry about on the sabbath to supply the necessity of a live dog, but not for a dead man, though he be a hero; and that as Solomon mentions the superiority of a living body over a dead one, he meant to hint at what occurred to himself with respect to his illustrious father's body when the spirit had left it; and this is what Rabbi Tenachom refinedly comments on this passage³.

Now as for myself, a humble individual, I have undertaken to explain this scroll in the way most agreeable to the literal signification of the text, and the connexion and sequence of the subjects contained in it. For I have observed that nearly all the commentators who had preceded me have almost entirely failed in doing justice to their task of interpretation⁴; and, (at the same time that I say it, I crave forgiveness from those great and glorious men⁵), I have not found in one of them an interpretation adequate to the correct explanation of the connexion of the verses of the book; but according to their method, nearly every verse is spoken separately and unconnectedly; and this would not be right in a private and insignificant author, and

² Mendelssohn's Phædon.

³ There is probably a Talmudic story that David died on a sabbath-day, and his son would not permit funeral honors to be paid him on that day.

⁴ The phrase יִצְאَ יְדֵי חַוּבָתָנוּ signifies "egreditur manus officii sui," i. e. liber est ab officio suo, satisfecit officio suo.

⁵ i. e. with all due respect be it said.

much less in a wise king to whom testimony is borne, that he spake by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. And as if it were not enough for him to be destitute of connexion and arrangement, even great contradictions are found in the words of this able man, according to the commentaries of most of the writers upon him; sometimes they make him assert a proposition, and sometimes deny it, and sometimes pronounce right, and sometimes wrong, what is in itself exactly the same thing; so that Rabbi Aben Ezra noticed these contradictions at the verse, “ vexation is better than laughter,” and says, that since the Scripture has borne testimony to Solomon, that after him there never will arise a wise man like him, we may be sure that there is no contradiction or inconsistency in his words, but that they are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge; and he has replied, though but briefly, to these instances of inconsistency; but my mind has not been set at rest by all that he has written there.

Now it is true that in the chapter ^{במה מדליקין}¹ we read, אמר ר' יהודה בר' דרב שמואל בר שלית בשם דרב בקש חכמים לנו ספר קהلت מפני דבריו סותרין זה את זה, “Judah son of Rabbi Samuel son of Shilath said in the name of Rav, ‘The wise men sought to secrete the book of Ecclesiastes because its words were contradictory to each other.’” But our sages doubtless meant that they seem so to him who has only informed himself about them at first sight, and sought to hide it only on account of the danger that may arise from it to men of levity of mind; for these holy men have shewn us themselves the way to solve the difficulties and contradictions which occur in the words of the wise man, and accordingly it is added, מפני מה לא גנוו מפני שתחלהו דברי תורה וסופה דברי תורה, i. e. “the reason why they did not secrete it was, because its beginning and end were consistent with the law;” and “therefore,” as Yarchi remarks in commenting on this

¹ Mischna, Schabbas, ch. x.

passage of the Talmud, “much more whatever is between the beginning and end.” And afterwards they discussed the explanation of the contradictions they found there; so that when they came to secrete also the book of Proverbs on account of the contradictions they found there, they came round and said, *ספר קולת עייננו ואשכחין טעםה כי נמי לעין*, i. e. “we have looked closely into the book Coheleth, and discovered a meaning in it. Here, too², let us look closely.” You see then that our sages, forbid it heaven, did not absolutely determine that Solomon’s words were at variance with each other; for this would be in the highest degree reprehensible in any intelligent man, and much more in one who spake by the Holy Ghost.

Consequently it becomes our duty to loose the bundles of doubts and undo the bands of the contradictions, which Aben Ezra has mentioned, in a manner agreeable to the simple interpretation of the text, according to the method I have pursued in my commentary, as is proper for one who undertakes to explain the primary meaning. And before I proceed to the interpretation, I shall premise to thee the known and approved rule in investigating the difficulties in the words of the book, viz. to recollect that all the things said in it do not represent the real opinion of king Solomon, but that sometimes he speaks after the manner of those who support two opposite sides in a discussion, an enquirer, and an answerer, as it is with those who are examining into difficult subjects; for those pursuing after truth by means of the exercise of the understanding, do not reach the object of their pursuit, unless they hear the contradictory arguments, and compare all the forms of the alleged doubts, and weigh in the balance and scales of justice the matter in debate and its converse, and bring the conflicting opinions into comparison, each beside each, until they distinguish truth from falsehood, and certain from doubtful. And since we have seen that the author of this roll wrote in

² i. e. in the Proverbs.

the way of investigation and open discussion, it is consistent with this, that no part of it should be attributed to himself¹, except the law which he has laid down in the beginning of his discourse, before the doubts and contradictory arguments started up, and the conclusion he arrives at² after the discussion and the completion of the investigation. And this is the meaning of what our wise men said about the beginning and end of it being agreeable with the words of the law. And if we find any of the intervening passages apparently strange and repugnant to the law of truth, it is proper to attribute these to the part of the objector, and they will then be represented as the opinion of the infidel or the sceptic, so that the wise man may be saved from blame. And in this way is interpreted in the book Zohar³ what is written in the 3rd chapter of this book,

¹ As his own opinion.

² Literally, "the ascent to agreement or accordance."

³ The זוהר Zohar is a most ancient Jewish commentary on the Pentateuch, which likewise contains much collateral matter, principally of a cabalistic and very recondite description. It is attributed to Rabbi Simeon, son of Jochanan, or, as he is called by contraction, "רשב"י. He was the disciple of Rabbi Akiva, a Talmudic Rabbi, who was slain fifty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, in Adrian's war against the Jews, about the year 120 A.D. The Jews say, that he lay hid in a cave twelve years, for fear of the emperor, and in the mean time wrote this book, which by the time he had finished it, was of such bulk, that R. Gedaliah, in the Schalscheleth, says, זה החיבור הויא כל כך נדול הכתמות שאם היה נמצאו כל ייחד היה משאת נמל. "This composition was so very great, that if it was all of it collected together, it would be a camel's burden." In many places it is repugnant to the doctrines of the Talmud; but where it treats of those things which are not discussed there, it is looked on by the Rabbins as of paramount authority. The author nowhere mentions the Gemara, or any Talmudic book, and this has led the Jews to suppose the compilation of the Talmud to be of a later date. Mendlessohn expresses his surprise at meeting with anything like a simple interpretation in it. Its language and style are very abstruse and difficult, and it is more replete with Syriacisms than the Talmud.

viz. on the hypothesis that they are hard words and apparently (forgive us, heaven, for saying so) contradictory to the truth of providence and the immortality of the soul, which are the foundations of the law of truth; they say, that גַּם אָחָר קְדוֹשָׁה מְגֻרִים' נְסָחָר חַיָּנוּ מֵלִין, אֲלֹא חַדְרָת חַיָּנוּ מֵלִין סְלָמָה כִּי קְדוֹשָׁה מְגֻרִים לְטַפְּצָה' דְּעַמְּיוֹ, וְחוֹיָה מְגֻרִים כִּי מִקְרָבָה שְׂחוֹת מִקְרָבָה הַכְּפָמָה וְנוֹ' טַפְּצָה' דְּלֹא יְדַעַנִּים וְלֹא מִסְתְּכָלִין צְמַמְתָּה חַמְרִי דְּסֶלִיחָה עַמְּחוֹ חַיָּל נִמְקָרָה, וּכְ"ה֙ גַּם חַגְנָמָה עַלְיָסוֹ, אֲלֹא מִקְרָבָה פְּלָדָס וּמִקְרָבָה סְכָמָה, וּמִקְרָבָה חַמְדָה וְנוֹ' וְכֵד סְלָמָה חַסְכָּלִין צְהִינָּוּן טַפְּצָה' דְּקַהְרִי דְּהָ, קָרֵי פָּוֹן זְמָסָה, דְּלַיְנָוּן עַכְדִּי גְּרַמְיָהוּ זְמָסָה מִמְּסָה "גַּנְיָן לְחַמְרִין מֵלִין מֵלִין," Solomon did not speak this passage in his own person, like the rest of his words; but he is here repeating the words of ignorant men of the world, who said so; and what did they say? 'That the same accidents happen to men and beasts, &c.;' ignorant that they are, and not knowing common sense, in that they say that this world goes by chance, and that the Holy One takes no care about it, but that 'the accidents of men and beasts are the same, and one chance happens to both of them,' and since Solomon knew them to be ignorant in that they said so, he calls them beasts, for that they made themselves mere beasts in that they said these words." You will see by referring to the place that the writer has commented on the connexion of these passages in a method approaching to the simple method of interpretation.

But still I in my humility have applied myself to interpret them after another manner; for after I had meditated on all this section from the beginning of it to its end, the simple sense of the passage seemed to be, that the most strong and certain proof of the immortality of the soul, and recompence in the life to come, was to be derived from the existence of wrong and violence in the world, viz. that as for the place of justice, wickedness was there, &c. For he who believes in the attri-

butes of God and his providence, cannot escape from one of these alternatives, either to believe that souls exist after death, and that there is hereafter a time of account for every action, whether good or bad, or¹, to impute evil and wrong to the breast of the blessed God. This is a proof which it is impossible to evade. But the nature of the soul and its formation is not by itself quite so strong a proof; for the caviller may perhaps choose to deny the superiority of man over the beast, and argue that both have the same breath. (See my commentary at the place, on chap. iii.) And in my opinion this interpretation of mine is more in accordance with the connexion of the passage, and agreeable to what is found in subsequent sections of this book; for the things there said appear at first sight more difficult and more remote from the radical principles of the law of truth even than what is said in the third chapter. And by the help of the blessed God I have laboured and found a right way, and, as I think, a true one, to dispose of every difficulty in those sections, and to explain the words of the wise king in a method by which they will be found to be not opposing, but strengthening the foundation of the law of truth.

² Now our Rabbins of blessed memory discussed carefully by the methods mentioned above whichever of his expressions are contradictory to one another. They say, “It is written, ‘Vexation is better than laughter,’ and again it is written, ‘I said of laughter, מוחלן דוא.’ It is written, ‘I praised mirth,’ and again it is written, ‘I said of mirth, What doeth it?’ There is no contradiction or inconsistency in saying, ‘Vexation is better than laughter,’ i. e. ‘better is the vexation wherewith God is vexed against the righteous than the laughter wherewith the Deity laughs at the wicked in this world,’ and in saying likewise, ‘I said of laughter, מוחלן דוא³,’ i. e. the laughter wherewith

¹ He inserts, “Forgive us, heaven, for saying it.”

² For the original of this passage, see page 95.

³ It is excellent.

the Deity laughs with the righteous in the world to come; and again in saying, ‘I was praising mirth,’ i. e. the mirth of the commandment, and in saying likewise, ‘Of mirth I said, What doeth it?’ i. e. the mirth, not of the commandment, &c.” It is clear from these their words that they interpreted מהולל as a word expressing praise, whereas, as Yarchi has explained it, and according to the simple interpretation of the passage, its sense will be as though it were derived from the word הוללות in the phrase הוללות וסכלות; and so it appears from what is clearly implied by the connexion of the sentences, “I said in my heart, Come now, I will try thee with mirth, and enjoy pleasure, and, behold, this also was in vain.” “I said of laughter, מהולל הוא, and of mirth, What doeth it?” and consequently it is evident that he is reprobating laughter, and saying of it that it is a thing in which there is no substantial good; but that our sages of blessed memory commented thus in consequence of the wise man’s having employed the word מהולל in this place, since its signification is sometimes that of praise and high excellence, as מהולל שם ירזה (Ps. cxlv. 3, and ex. 3), and sometimes of folly and want of understanding, so that it would seem that the secondary sense is, that sometimes laughter is excellent, and to be praised. But it is impossible to speak of laughter as “of the commandment,” for they had already said, “The Shechinah dwells not in the midst of laughter⁴,” which Yarchi explains by saying that “the mind

⁴ The passage here alluded to is in Bab. Talmud, Psachim, Lect. x. and is as follows: לְדוֹד מִמּוֹר, מַלְמֵד שְׁרָתָה עַלְיוֹ שְׁכִינָה וְאַחֲר כִּי אָמַר שִׁירָה, מִמּוֹר לְדוֹד, מַלְמֵד שָׁאמֵר שִׁירָה וְאַחֲר כִּי שְׁרָתָה עַלְיוֹ שְׁכִינָה, לְלִימֹד שֶׁאָין הַשְׁכִינָה שָׁוֹרָה לְאַמְתֹךְ עַצְלֹת וְלֹא מְתֹךְ עַצְבֹּת וְלֹא מְתֹךְ שְׁחוֹק וְלֹא מְתֹךְ קְלֹת- רָאשׁ וְלֹא מְתֹךְ דְּבָרִים בְּטָלִים אֶלָּא מְתֹךְ וּבְרָשְׁמָה שֶׁל מְצָה שָׁנָאָמֵר וְעַפְתָּה קָחוּ לִי מִנְגָּן יְהוָה בְּנֵנוּ נִמְנְגָּנוּ וְתִדְבֵּר עַלְיוֹן. That is to say, “Unto David a Psalm.” This informs us that

of the laughing person is not well regulated, and though he be not guilty of scorning, still he has no regulation of mind;" where it seems that his meaning was to explain why our sages praised what they called "the laughter of the commandment," and again found fault with it; and that he means that laughter in a child of man was condemned by them at all events, because it engrosses and unsettles the human mind. And you may observe with surprise that the sages have not thought proper to praise laughter in a child of man, and nevertheless have attributed it to the Creator, blessed be his name, (they say, "I said of laughter, **מִזְאֵלֶל הוּא**, i. e. the laughter wherewith the Deity laughs with the saints;" and so of vexation they say, "The vexation wherewith God is vexed with the righteous, &c.") because in the case of a man who laughs or is vexed, his mind is not well regulated or settled in him, and through means of laughter and vexation he proceeds to folly and madness, and therefore in a human bosom they are culpable; but

that the Schechinah dwelt upon him (first), and that after that he uttered the song of praise: "A Psalm unto David." This informs us that he sang the song of praise first, and then the Schechinah dwelt upon him afterwards; for the Schechinah dwells neither amidst apathy nor amidst melancholy, laughter, levity, or idle prattling, but amidst the cheerfulness of the commandment; (i. e. arising from the fulfilling of it, or in accordance with, and in subordination to it); for it is written, "But now bring me a minstrel;" "and it came to pass when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him." It is true, as Mendlessohn says, that the Rabbins are here guilty of apparent inconsistency; but I think it is clear that where they spoke in the Medrasch on Ecclesiastes, of "the laughter of, or agreeable to, the commandment," they meant exactly the same as what they express in the above passage of the Talmud, by "the cheerfulness (**תָּמֹשׁ**) of the commandment;" which is so continually recommended throughout the book of Ecclesiastes; just as where they speak of the "laughter of the Deity with the saints in the world to come," they can only mean his sublime joy, and undisturbed felicity, not the convulsion which we call laughter.

the great God is not affected by them at all, but he, so to speak, laughs in righteousness, and is vexed in judgment in his simple will, without suffering¹ diminution or change in any of his attributes; and consequently in every place where the scripture praises laughter or vexation, it is proper that you should refer it as to its secondary sense to the blessed God, because with him those qualities are free from all defect or cause of blame. Wherefore our sages in their recondite commentary have referred the word מהלך to the laughter of the Holy One with his saints in the world to come; and whereas this laughter is highly indeed to be praised, he says in conclusion, of the laughter which is not of the commandment, "What doeth it?" For it is good to restrain oneself from that paltry mirth². And their recondite commentary on the verse, "Vexation is better than laughter," is very much in accordance with my explication of the passage; for the primary meaning there is, as you will see hereafter in my commentary, that the intelligent poor man, of whom he has spoken in the preceding verses, is not altogether destitute of happiness, as the mass of fools imagine; for in truth man knows not what is good for him in the term of his life under the sun, and sometimes his temporary prosperity will be to his hurt; and on this account he says, "Vexation is better than laughter," for in gloominess of looks the heart may be cheerful. He means that sadness is not always evil, nor laughter absolutely good for man, and sometimes that the heart is happy when the face is sorrowful; but because it is not proper to commend vexation in a child of man, because this passion wounds his soul, and brings him under "the category³ of error," as our sages say, on this account our sages interpreted it of the

¹ Forgive us the thought. ² End of the specimen, vide p. 96.

³ In Perke Avoth, Lect. 3. רבי עקיבא אומר שחוק וקלות ראש Rabbi Akivah said, "Laughter and levity of mind accustom men to lewdness."

vexation of providence against the righteous in this world ; for even if the Deity be vexed against the wise poor man, and he seems to the sons of men as though he were altogether destitute of happiness and struggling against life ; still it is better for him to be the object of this vexation, than of the laughter wherewith God laughs against the wicked, who prospers in his hour, and eats his only portion in this world.

And now let us proceed to the contradictions which Aben Ezra mentions ; and we shall reply to them according to our method in the commentary on the text, viz. according to the simple interpretation of it.

Now the first difficulty is in the use of the word **בָּזֵק**. It is written, “ Vexation is better than laughter,” and the contrary of this, “ Vexation rests in the bosom of fools ;” and so “ In much wisdom is much vexation,” and its opposite, “ Put away vexation from thy heart.” Now the word **בָּזֵק** is used in Hebrew¹ for the boiling wrath of the mind and its indignation against an act of wrong and violence. For it is part of the nature of the intelligent soul to experience pain in beholding oppression of the poor and perversion of judgment and justice ; and to put on the garment of indignation to take vengeance on him who does the wrong. And this outrage may be either a real or only a seeming one ; for sometimes a man is vexed with his neighbour from supposing that he has done him wrong or violence when such is not the case, but the thing was for his good. Now vexation against real wrong is proper and laudable in itself, as is clear to every intelligent man ; though as respects the feelings of the heart, the man who gives way to vexation cannot escape pain and suffering, and his mind is not in a settled state as it should be ; and thus it is that vexation brings a man “ under the category of error,” as we have said ; and it is quite proper for a man to try with all his might to hate evil and abominate violence, and to

¹ As a noun.

take vengeance on the perfidious, provided only that he continue free from all passion or ebullition of feeling whatever, if this be possible for one born of woman; for this is a part of that middle course which our sages have so highly commended².

² Vid. Maimonides, *Yad Hachazakah*, "Precepts on the Government of the Temper," Chap. i. § 3, p. 151, in Mr Bernard's translation:—

"III. But between each disposition and the disposition opposed to "it [namely] that at the other extreme, there are intermediate dispositions, which are also in opposition to each other.

"IV. The two opposite extremes in different dispositions, are not "the right way; nor does it become a man to proceed in the same, "nor to discipline himself to the same; if, therefore, he finds that he "is inclined towards one of them by his nature, or that he is disposed "to become inclined towards one of them, or that he has already "acquired one of them and practised the same, he ought to turn back "for the better, and to proceed in the way of the good which is the "right way.

"V. Now the right way is that middle state, which is found in all "the dispositions of man, namely, that disposition which is equally "remote from the two extremes, so that it is not nearer to the one "[extreme] than it is to the other. The sages of old have therefore "directed, that a man should always estimate (i. e. that he should be "aware of the power or force of) his dispositions, and that he should "calculate and direct the same, [so as to keep] the intermediate way, "to the end that he may preserve a perfect harmony [even] in his "bodily constitution.

"VI. For instance, he ought neither to be a passionate and irritable "man, nor yet like a dead man who has no feeling at all; but [he "should keep] between [these two extremes]; so as never to be irritated, except by some serious matter, such as ought to be resented, "in order that the same thing may not be done a second time. He "ought likewise to wish for such things only as the body stands in "need of, and without which it is not possible to subsist, just as it "is said: 'The righteous eateth to the satisfying of the soul,' (Prov. "xiii. 25). Again, he ought not to toil too much in his business, "unless [it be] to obtain those things which are necessary for his "temporary life, just as it is said, 'A little that a righteous man hath "is better,' (Ps. xxxvii. 16). Neither ought he to shut his hand, nor

"to

But vexation against only apparent violence is folly. It arises from want of knowledge, and dwells chiefly in the bosom of fools, because they cannot distinguish between good and evil. And now all these verses will be seen to be plain and straightforward. He says, "Vexation is better than laughter;" i. c. (as we have observed above) it is better for the poor but wise man mentioned in the preceding verses to suffer vexation and annoyance at seeing violence and oppression, than to indulge in the laughter of the wicked who fling arrows of death, and say, Are we not in sport? But in chapter vi. he speaks

"to waste all his mammon; but he ought to give alms in proportion
"to the means he possesses, and also to lend to him who stands in
"need, as becomes [a generous man]. Moreover, he ought to be neither
"a jocose or a gay man, nor a sullen or melancholy man; but should
"always manifest a pleasing cheerfulness, and a friendly countenance;
"and so it ought to be with regard to all his other dispositions; this
"way being the way of the wise.

"VII. The man whose dispositions are altogether modified and intermediate, is called בְּכָר a wise man; but he who is still more careful about himself, and who [occasionally and seasonably] declines somewhat from intermediate dispositions towards the one side or the other, is called תַּדִּין a pious man.

"VIII. For instance, if one were to recede from haughtiness of mind so far as [to reach] the opposite extreme, and [consequently] become an exceedingly humble-minded man, one would then be called a pious man, this being the virtue of piety; but if one were to recede [from it] as far as the middle [point] only, and become an unassuming man, one would be called a wise man, this being the virtue of wisdom; and so it would be with all other dispositions.

"IX. Now the pious men of old used [occasionally] to bend their dispositions from the intermediate way, towards the two extremes; one disposition they would bend towards the lowest extreme, and again another disposition they would urge on towards the highest extreme, [as the case might require]; now this is [said to be] more even than [what] the line of justice [would require].

"X. With regard, however, to ourselves, we are commanded to walk in the intermediate ways, which are the ways of the good and of the righteous."

against him who murmurs against the providence of God in this world, and does not take into consideration the termination of the thing, and what shall be in the end of it. He had said in the preceding verse, "Be not quickly excitable in thy spirit to vexation, &c." as much as to say, Since all the ways of God are righteousness and judgment, it follows that the tranquillity of the wicked, and the chastisement of the just in this world, is not really evil (forgive us heaven for the thought); for God is glorified by it; but only seemingly evil to the sons of men who lack understanding. Therefore be not quickly excitable to vexation at the accidents of the sons of men, for this sort of vexation is cherished only in the bosom of fools. As to what he says, "that in much philosophy is much vexation," that is said with reference to his meaning that it is impossible for man to escape distress and sorrow altogether, when he observes how man oppresses his neighbour, and that the wicked swallows up him who is more righteous than himself; and from increase of wisdom, a man becomes more sensitive to wrong and violence, and thereby more vexation is generated; for only one among a thousand can be found who can always command his temper so as not to be vexed. But at the end of the book he advises man to dispel vexation from his heart, and to strengthen himself against the tumults of nature with all his might. Now there is a great difference between the precepts of wisdom, and the practice of the wise man. For wisdom commands to do good, and to depart from evil, and prescribes by way of an instance of it, "Remove vexation entirely from thy heart;" meaning, that if the liberty and power to do so had been committed to man, it were proper for him to shun the distress and perturbation of vexation altogether. But the wise man, as being a mere human creature, is not free from defect by reason of his humanity, and he is the wisest whose defects are the fewest; and since it is one of the consequences of investigation and reflection, to increase

our sensibility to harm and benefit, and to enlarge our perceptions of the distinctions of good and evil, it is quite consistent that he should say, that "in much philosophy is much vexation."

And the second contradiction which Aben Ezra mentions is, that it is written, that "that which is good, that which is excellent, is to eat and drink," and the contrary of this, "It is good to go to the house of mourning." According to the explanation I have given from the connexion of the verses, there is no contradiction at all here; it is evidently more good and excellent for a man "to eat and drink, and see good done to others by his labour," than that he should labour for wind, and "eat all his days in the dark, and be vexed, and suffer illness and peevishness." And nevertheless going to the house of mourning is not always bad, nor going to the house of feasting always good and advantageous for man; and this is all the meaning of the passage where he says, "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to that of feasting," as I shall by God's help explain at the place.

The third contradiction is one which our sages have mentioned, that it is written, "I praised mirth," and the contrary of this, "I said of mirth, What avails it?" And here we have already had their explanation, where they speak of what they call "the laughter of the commandment," as we have mentioned. And besides as to what he says of mirth, viz. "What avails it?" the fact is, he had wished to find perfect good and happiness for man in mirth, and drinking, and song, and after he had made trial also of this method, he repented and said of laughter, It is mad, and of mirth, What doeth it?

The fourth contradiction is that we have, "What advantage has the wise man above the fool?" and the contrary of this, "Wisdom has an advantage over folly." Now I have noticed in the book Zohar a recondite comment on this latter verse, nearly approaching to a simple commentary, and this is surprizing.

ר' חייס פתח ותמר The original in the Zohar is as follows:— רוחיתך חמי טיס יתרון למחמתן מין סמכות וגומר, נכמה חתר מסתכלתו במליל, דסלאה מלכו וധשנה נחכמתה סבינהה דיל', ותסתייר מלוי לנו פיכלה קדישא, פלי קרכו היה למחמתכלו כי, חמה, תמר ורוחיתך חמי וכי שלר דמי עלה עלי ידענו ולי חמיון, הפליא מהן לדע ידע נכמה עין יומי ולען חנסנש נס ידע טיס יתרון למחמתן מין סמכות כיתרונן טהור עין שפוך, וכוכו שבח גורמי' ותמר רוחיתך חמי לאן פכי תחנהן כו', ורוחיתך חמי טיס יתרון למחמתן מין סמכות כלומר אין סמכות חמץ חתני תועלתה נחכמתה, לדקמלהן לאן חשתכח סוטה נעה נעה חסתהודע חכמתהן ומליין, ותחנהן קויבען טהור על זר נס דלאוין' חכמתהן לאיילך עין סוטה, ומנגדה לא נני דחתני תועלתה נחכמתה נבנין, נסורה ולען חתני פשטתעה נעה מין' כו', תקין דקוורה מיהי טיהו חוכמתהן ודקמלהן חוכמתה לא חסתהודע כוורל', תמר רבנן נפק מצל למתוקן במר לדע חיינס טעה דמתיקין עד דעת' מרירין מהן עזיד לאיהי מתקין טיהו חימר פלי' מרירין ופי'נו דכתיב (קסלה ו') נס חט וס לטאות וס טוותה ר' חיים opened his mouth and said, ‘As to the passage, I saw that wisdom has a superiority over folly, &c. in many places I have made myself acquainted with the words of king Solomon, and contemplated the great wisdom which was his; and I have found that he concealed his words in the innermost recesses as it were of a holy temple¹. This passage too is such that it must be looked into. Why does he say, I have seen, as if the rest of the sons of men do not know or perceive it? even he who has not known wisdom all his life, and has not contemplated it, knows that wisdom has a superiority over folly, as light has over darkness; but Solomon praises himself, and says, I have seen; but in so saying he teaches’—and so on. “But I have seen that wisdom has an advantage משלכות, i. e. that absolutely from folly is derived an advantage to wisdom, since if there were no folly in the

¹ That is, that he wrote in a very mysterious manner.

world, wisdom and its lessons would not be appreciated; and he means to teach that it is necessary for a son of man who would learn wisdom, to learn from folly and to be acquainted with it, because that advantage accrues to wisdom by means of it, like the advantage which accrues to light from darkness, since but for darkness light would not be perceived to be light, nor any effect from it come into the world,"—and so on,—“and the beauty of whiteness, wherein does it consist? in (its contrast to) blackness; and but for blackness, whiteness would not be appreciated.” Rabbi Isaac gives an illustration from the relation of bitter to sweet, since no one appreciates the taste of sweetness, till he have tasted bitterness. ‘What has made this to be sweetness? we must say, that bitterness has.’ And this is the meaning of what is written, ‘He has set this over against the other,’ &c.” Quem vide. But here, too, according to the explanation I shall by God’s help there give, according to the simple interpretation of the text, there is no contradiction at all. But on the contrary, the one was an expression of surprise on the part of the wise man, “I have seen that in respect of intelligence the wise man has an advantage over the fool, but nevertheless I perceive that in respect of chance they are all on an equality, and the same chance happens to both of them!” (see my commentary on this passage.) And again, as for his expression, “What advantage has the wise man over the fool?” this is merely an argument of the murmuring objectors, as by God’s help I shall explain.

As for the fifth contradiction, our sages have mentioned it. “I praised the dead, &c.” and the contrary of this, “that a live dog is better than a dead lion.” I have already gone to some length upon this above.

The sixth contradiction is, that “there is no work, or device, or knowledge, or wisdom in the grave,” and the contrary of this, that “there is a time for every work there.” I have

gone to some length on these passages in my commentary; and, according to my method, both of them really refer to one subject, the immortality of the soul, and recompence in the life to come; and as to his expression **כִּי אֵין מְעַשָּׁה** its interpretation is, “if there be no work, &c.” (See my commentary at the place; for there is no good in repetition.)

And so with regard to the seventh and eighth contradictions, if you will acquaint yourself with my commentary on them, you will see and understand that his expression, “And shall not good happen to the wicked, &c.” is not at all repugnant to his remark, “There is the case of a bad man prolonging his days in his injustice;” for the former verse, as explained from those preceding it, is to be read with a note of interrogation. “Why should not the wicked attain at least to apparent prosperity in this world?” and consequently it is not repugnant to the latter verse, “There is the case,” &c.; besides, this verse is spoken with reference to the administration of kingdoms, as I have there explained. And so in saying, “It shall be good to the fearers of God,” he speaks of the true good and prosperity in the world to come, as is there set forth; and in his saying that “There are bad men to whom it happens as if they had done the work of the just, &c.” he speaks of the unsatisfactory state of things under the sun; and the beginning of the passage is, “There is an unsatisfactory thing which takes place under the sun, that there are just men to whom it happens as if they had done the work of the wicked,” &c.

Now the reader will see in this my commentary, that I have not paid any attention to the divisions of chapter and verse in ordinary use among us. And in this respect I have walked in the steps of former commentators; for most of them did not regard the pauses of the chapters and verses. For these signs are received among our people as intended for no other purpose but that of saving trouble to the reader in seeking a

verse or word in the bible¹; not for that of judging by means of them at what place a subject begins or where it ends; but the liberty was allowed to every commentator of placing those marks² according to his own plan in the interpretation of the sense; and you will see many passages of this roll where it is impossible, on any of the interpretations, for the end of the sense of the subjects to coincide with the present places of the marks. Now at first it occurred to me to place the signs of the chapters and verses in the places agreeable with my interpretation. But since I had observed that in the index³ of the Talmud, the printers have proceeded with reference to the signs in ordinary use among us, and I was afraid to make a change which might only cause trouble to the reader, when he wishes to discover a passage he seeks for; and I also observed that sometimes they had altered the place of a pause for a good reason⁴,

¹ This is a very important remark of our author's. From the scrupulous exactness of Mendelssohn in deviating in no instance from the Masoretic text, either in this roll, or in the Pentateuch, it is quite clear that he agreed with the opinion of all the literary authorities of his own nation, (Elias Levita alone excepted), in holding the extreme antiquity of the system of points, and therefore of the divisions of chapter and verse, which form a part of it, and in ascribing them to Ezra and his coadjutors, who, it is said, fearing that the pronunciation and interpretation of the sacred text might be entirely lost in case of the recurrence of such national calamities as the Babylonish captivity, which had already occasioned a great corruption of the Jewish language, took these means to perpetuate it. Nevertheless, he gives this decided opinion about the pauses of chapter and verse.

² ייְזָר, a mark.

³ The index of the Talmud here spoken of is an index of the passages of scripture quoted in it.

⁴ There are several books in the Bible, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Lamentations, and Malachi, which end with a harsh expression; and in all the Hebrew Bibles the preceding verse εὐφημιας χαριν is printed over again, and so read in all the synagogues. They are thus designated: י stands for Isaiah; ק for קִנְאָה, or Lamentations; פ for פִּתְמָלֵת, or the Preacher; and ט for טַבְרִי עֲשָׂר, 2 + 10 = 12, i. e. the minor pro-

viz. not to stop at a harsh expression; I was induced by these considerations to leave the marks in their original places⁵.

And know, dear reader, that it is not out of the stores of my own mind that I have produced all the things stated in this my Commentary, but that the greater part of them I have collected from other books of preceding authors; and the book of the *מִכְלָל יֹפֵי*⁶ of Rabbi Solomon⁷ has been a help and advantage to me in the commentary on words, and the grammar of the language; and in that on the sense of the text, I have closely followed those great commentators, Yarchi and Aben Ezra, except in places where it was necessary to differ from them; and in every place where I have found their method agreeable with the simple sense of the words, and the original intention of the wise king, I have put down their words, word for word, without alteration or change; and because our wise men have counselled us to receive truth from whoever speaks it, I have also sought in the works⁸ of the commentators who are not of the sons of Israel; and wherever I found in their mouths a word of truth, I offered it to the Lord, and it became holy.

phets, of which Malachi is last, (*תְּנִינִים* being Chaldee for two). These letters are formed into one word *קְבַעַת*, and we find in the Masoretic notes at the end of each of these books *קְבַעַת סִימָן יְהוָה* written.)

⁵ But at the same time he has pointed out where the divisions would be according to his plan.

⁶ Perfection of beauty.

⁷ This book of R. Solomon was written in A.D. 1490, and printed in 1567, at Salonica.

⁸ Literally, "sacks," in allusion to Gen. xliv. 12.

IN presenting to the reader the new Version of Ecclesiastes, to which the preceding pages have been introductory, I am desirous to preclude an impression which an imperfect view of it might lead him to form, that it is in any respect a paraphrase. Though not divided into the chapters and verses of our received translation, (these being merely noted in the margin to facilitate reference), it is a most close and literal rendering of the original. Whenever a word is introduced to which there is no word corresponding in the Hebrew text, it is printed in italics, a practice which has long been adopted in translations of the Bible into modern languages. Nor let the reader be startled by the total discrepancies which he will meet with in many passages between this version and that which he has hitherto been accustomed to use. Much he will perceive to be unaltered; but whenever those discrepancies occur, let me intreat him to consider carefully the arguments in their behalf detailed in the annotations to the text, where he will always find each fully discussed. Our received translation of the Sacred Text is in general one of admirable, nay wonderful, correctness, and for majesty of style unrivalled; but with regard to this book, perhaps more than any other, very much additional elucidation has been effected since the time of King James I.; and surely the discoveries and manifest improvements of a later period ought not to be rejected in the translation of the Bible, any more than in other branches of ancient literature, wherein the accumulation of correct knowledge must necessarily be the progressive work of successive ages. It must be allowed by the most prejudiced admirers of the received translation, that the version of Ecclesiastes contained in it is in many places either so obscure as to be unintelligible, or so apparently opposed in doctrine to the rest of scripture, that a sweeping system of adaptation and far-

fetched commentary must be adopted in order to justify the inspired writer. And these obscurities and difficulties afford a reasonable suspicion, which reference to the original will increase to certainty, of the inaccuracy of the translation of a book which is not prophetic in its character, but evidently intended for the general instruction of mankind. On the contrary, that which I here present to the reader, every word and expression of which has been weighed with the most assiduous and prolonged attention, will be found to convey throughout a clear and obvious sense which needs no paraphrase; and the somewhat bulky annotations which follow, are necessary, not to explain its meaning, but to establish its claim to be considered a faithful rendering of the original. I would therefore again intreat the reader not to content himself with the sense therein presented to him, but to verify it by reference to the annotations.

I have followed the example of the authors of our received version, in prefixing to each of the sections into which the sense of the book divides itself, an introductory analysis, containing a concise view of the topics therein treated of. These it will be well for the reader on no account to pass over, as they form in themselves perhaps the best sort of commentary, as preparing him to see clearly and follow easily the sometimes subtle and intricate argument of the section. And occasionally he will find that should the first perusal of a section have failed to satisfy him of the perspicuity of its contents, a second reference to the analysis will make it perfectly clear to him. This remark applies especially to Sections VI. X. and XI., which are of no ordinary difficulty, and the following version of which is entirely new.

For my neglect of the divisions of chapter and verse in ordinary use, there is ample apology in Mendelssohn's remarks on that subject in the conclusion of his preface (*vide p. 89*); and for my having placed the marks of those divisions on the

side of the page, instead of inserting them into the text and dividing it at each, abundant precedent is furnished by numerous editions of the Old and New Testament in the originals, and several translations in our own language. I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to adhere to the phraseology of our biblical version, on account of the very natural partiality which is generally felt for it, and its real dignity and simplicity, which render it a more befitting garb for the revelations of divine truth, than could be furnished out of a more modern vocabulary, though this might convey to the modern reader a more correct and intelligible representation of the sense of the original. Nevertheless it has been found necessary to employ words not to be met with in a Biblical Concordance in several places, where the peculiar modification of meaning of Hebrew words seems not to have been perceived by those translators. As instances of this, it will be found that the word **הַבָּל** is sometimes rendered “unsatisfactory,” and sometimes “transitory,” in passages where the word “vanity” by no means adequately represents it, and that **אֲלֹתְחַפֵּם יוֹתֶר** is rendered “affect not excessive penetration.” It must be recollect that this book is unique in its character, and the only specimen in the sacred volume of open discussion on philosophy and political economy, and that consequently, it might be expected that a vocabulary sufficient for the translation of the other portions of it should be found inadequate to the full and correct exhibition in our language of the reasonings of the royal sage. I trust, then, that such deviations from ordinary biblical phraseology as I have laboured in vain to avoid, as well as whatever beside he may regard as blemishes in this version, will meet with the reader’s indulgence, if he finds, as I may venture to hope that he will, that by means of it this portion of the sacred volume approves itself to him, in a greater degree than it did before, as “plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.”

It will be seen that I have given along with each verse of the Hebrew text an original Latin translation, which generally coincides closely in sense with my English version. My object in so doing was to determine the sense more rigorously than can possibly be done by a literal translation in a single language, which from its ambiguities may occasionally fail in conveying to the reader the exact meaning intended by the translator. An additional advantage of a Latin translation is, that it will render this volume not altogether useless to persons unacquainted with English, should it chance to fall into their hands.

I subjoin the following specimen of the original of Mendlessolin's Preface, vide p. 78.

זהנה רכונינו ז"ל טקלו וטרו נסונג' פג"ק מה' דבריו סותרים
זה לית זו, כתיב טוג כעם משוחק וכתיב' לפחוק חומרתי מושלך, כתיב
ופצחה' אני לית הפסחה וכתיב' ולפכמה מה וט עופס, גל' קפ' טוג
עם משוחק טוג כעם שכועם פקכ"ה על פלדיקיס משוחק שמחק
פקכ"ה על הרשעים נעה'ו, ולפחוק חומרתי מושלך וט שחוק שמחק
פקכ"ה עס פלדיקיס נעה'ב, וטנק חי' לית הפסחה וזה שמחה טל
מנוס, ולפכמה מה וט עופס וזה שמחה טר'ינה טל מילוס, וכו'ב'
נראה מדנרייס טפ'ירטו מושלך לטען סנה', כמו טפ'ירט' ז"ל ולפי
פטעטו טל מקריח יס' מילסן טולאות וטכלות, וכן נראה ממושעות
שמען פכטוכיס חומרתי' אני בלאי לאה' לא הנמכת נטמחה ורלה' בטוב
וינה' גס וט פג'ל, לפחוק חומרתי' מושלך ולפכמה מה וט עופס, וח'ב'
כולד'י טג'ינה פטוק ויה'מר עלו טסוח דנ'ר טין' בו מה'ם, גל' טט'ט'מ'י'
ז"ל דרטו צן מה'מר טאטמאס הח' נח'ת' מושלך, טט'ו'ת' פעם
טא'ט' וטאט'ל'ה ט'ח'ירה וטעט' פט'ל', וטעד' קדעת', יט'ט'ט' טאט'ו'נה

הפני' טפעריים ספקוק מיטוכם , ווי' חפסר לומר בטנקוק טל מנוּה , כי
כבר חיירו אין בטכינס טורה לע מותוק בטנקוק כו' ופי' רס"ז ז"ל טליין
דעת בטנקוק הייפכת וחיפוי' אין זו נטען מכל מקום אין זו יטוב עכ"ל ,
נראה טכוון רס"ז בזס לפרט מודע טנמי' חכמים טנקוק טל מנוּה ולו
טנמי' בטנקוק טל מנוּה , וקחמר טפי' לאס בטנקוק ננן חזס מגונה בכל
חופן , מעני טהור מעריד ומכלכלת חת דעת טולדס , ורואה וסתפלוּן
טלען רנוּ חכמיינו ז"ל לטנק חת בטנקוק ננן חזס , ועס כל ווי' יחסינו
חיל פגוריין יתגרץ טמו , וויהריו לטנקוק חילרטוי מופולן , וויא בטנקוק
טנקוק פקכ"א עס פנדיקיס , וכן הצעם , וויהריו טוב הצעם טכוועם
פקכ"א עס פנדיקיס וכו' לפי טהור לטנקוק חוּ טכוועם חיין דעתו
היופכת עליו וסוח נול עלי ידי בטנקוק וכצעם טנקנות וסגולות , ולכון
טס מגוּן' נמקו , האכט טס יעהלא טמו לע יתפעל עלי ידים כלהו ,
ויסוח בכיכול בטנקוק בילדך וכצעם נמפסט נרגונו טפערט , מילתי מסרוּן
חוּ טנוּ ח"ז ניחת ממדתו , וו"כ נכל מקום טאנטוב טנקח חת
בטנקוק חוּ הצעם יתכן טטינטו טכוועה הפני' האט טס ית' לפי טהיגנוּ
סמדוּט טלוּן מנוקות מכל חמוץ ומכל גנות , נכך דרישו ח"ז תינכט
מהולל על בטנקוק פקכ"א עס פנדיקיס געש"ב , וויהר בטנקוק טס
מיושם מהוד , מיטיס וויהר בטנקה טליינה טל מנוּה מה וו שופט , כי
טוב מהנוּח חת ענמו מן בטנקה טגראעה טפי' .

THE BOOK
OF
S O L O M O N,
CALLED
E C C L E S I A S T E S.

THE FIRST SECTION.

Solomon asserts the vanity of all human pursuits. As a general proof and illustration of this assertion, he shews that the four elements and consequently all earthly things are moving in a round of constant recurrence, so that whatever happens must have happened before, though there be no record of it, and must happen again; and that therefore human labour can produce nothing new.

¹ **T**H E words of the Preacher^a, the son of David, * Heb.
"Com-
piler." king in Jerusalem.

² Vanity of vanities, said the Preacher^a, vanity
³ of vanities, all is vanity. What advantage has
man in all his labour which he performs under
⁴ the sun? One generation of *earthly things* de-
parts, and another generation comes, while the *bulk*
⁵ of the earth remains for ever the same. The sun
also arises and the sun sets, and is hastening^b to "Panting
for." his place there while rising *here*; going to the

south, and returning to the north; the wind goes 6
round and round, and the *same* wind returns on
its circuits again. All the rivers go into the sea, 7
and yet the sea is never *too* full; to the place
where the rivers are going, thither they will be

^{c Literally,} ^{d Or, "out} going again. All things are in activity^e; man 8
cannot describe it all, as the eye cannot be satis-
fied with seeing, or the ear filled with hearing.
What has been, is that which will be, and what 9
has been done, is that which will be done; and
there is nothing new under the sun. Should there 10
be anything whereof it should be said, "Behold
this is new!" it has already been in the ages which
were before us^d. The former things are not re- 11
membered, and likewise the latter things which
will be, will not be remembered in the time of
those that shall be hereafter.

THE SECOND SECTION.

*He points out in detail the unprofitableness of
the several departments of human labour; and
first as to philosophy and science, he says that
having pursued them to their utmost extent, amid
all the advantages for so doing that he pos-
sessed, he had found them so unsatisfactory as
hardly to bear comparison with folly and ig-
norance.*

12 I THE Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem; and I applied myself to examine and investigate philosophically concerning all that is done under the sun. Sad is this employment which God has given *an impulse* to the sons of men to be engaged in. I contemplated all the works which are done under the sun; and, behold! all were vanity and a mere windy notion. The perverted could not be set right, and the deficient could not be supplied. I spake within myself, saying, “Lo, I have extended and propagated philosophy above all that were before me in Jerusalem, and my mind has seen much philosophy and science.”

17 And so I set myself to compare^a philosophy with madness and folly. I found that this too was a mere windy idea. For in much philosophy is much vexation, and he who increases science increases disappointment.

Heb. “To know philosophy and to know folly and ignorance.”

THE THIRD SECTION.

He next made trial of what is farthest removed from philosophic investigation, mirth and hilarity, and came to a similar conclusion.

CHAP.
II.

1 I SAID in my mind, “Come now, let me try thee with mirth,” and “enjoy pleasure”; and, lo, this too was in vain. I said of laughter, “It is mad,” and of mirth, “What does this avail^a? ”

Heb. “do.”

THE FOURTH SECTION.

He then tried to combine these two extremes, and applied his wisdom and science to the refinements of taste and luxury, hoping to find satisfaction in the union of animal and intellectual enjoyments, but with the same want of success as he had before experienced.

I SOUGHT in my mind how to cherish my bodily ³ frame with wine, and my mind still training itself in philosophy to retain folly likewise, till I might find what is the best thing for the sons to do under heaven, during the term of their life-time. I extended my works; I built myself houses; I ⁴ planted myself vineyards: I made myself gardens ⁵ and parks, and planted them with every sort of fruit tree: I made myself reservoirs of water, from ⁶ which to water the plantation for rearing trees: I ⁷ procured men-servants and maid-servants, and I had a household; I had also large herds of great and small cattle above all that were before me in Jerusalem: I also amassed to myself silver and ⁸ gold, and the treasures of kings and provinces: I trained for myself men-singers and women-singers, and those delights of the sons of man, several captive women. And I became great and opulent ⁹ above all that were before me in Jerusalem; besides my philosophy was an assistance^a to me. And ¹⁰ nothing that my eyes desired did I withhold from them; nor did I refrain myself from any enjoy-

^a Literally,
"stood by
me"—
"stood me
in stead."

ment, for my mind derived enjoyment from all my occupation, and that was the profit^b I looked for from all my labour.

11 But I turned to all the works which my hands had made, and to all the labour which I had toiled 12 to perform: and, lo! it was all a mere breath and windy notion, and there was no profit under the sun.

THE FIFTH SECTION.

He tells us that he relinquished this experiment as hopeless, convinced that no one could ever give it a fairer trial than he had done; and next mentions several other instances of the fruitlessness of human labour for the attainment of wisdom or wealth, or the retention of them when acquired; the observation of which had inspired him with such contempt and despair of life, that even the reflection that the good things of this life are disposed of by the hand of God alone, and that it is on this account that our efforts often fail, only made the view of human affairs appear to him still more dark and unsatisfactory.

13 SO I turned away from the contemplation of philosophy in union with^a madness and folly: for *^{Heb.} "and." in such a matter what can any one else effect who comes after a king? only what has^b already been 14 done. Now I perceived that philosophy has an advantage over ignorance, just as light has an

^b Literally,
"portion
derived
from it."

^a Heb.
"what
they have
already
done."

advantage over darkness; *for that as for* the philosopher, his eyes are in his head, but the fool walks in darkness: and yet I found also that the same chance may happen to both of them: and 15 I said to myself, "Just like the chance of the

^c Heb. "I too, it may happen to me."

fool, as to myself also^c it may happen to me; and to what purpose then am I wiser than he?"

so I said to myself, that this also was in vain.

For the wise man as well as the fool will not 16

always be remembered, inasmuch as in future ages they will already both have been forgotten. And alas! how dies the wise man? like the fool! So 17

I hated life; for sad to me was all the work done

under the sun, because all of it was a breath, and

a mere windy notion: and I hated all my labour 18

which I had performed under the sun, inasmuch

as I am to leave it to one who shall survive me,

(and who knows whether he will be a wise man 19

or a fool?), and is to be master of all my work which

my toil and wisdom have produced under the sun;

and this is unsatisfactory. I even turned to give 20

^d Heb. "To make my mind despair."

my mind up to despair^d about all the labour which

I had performed under the sun; because there are^e 21

men whose labour is skilful and scientific and

successful, and who have to resign their profit from

it to those who have had no part in that labour;

and this is an unsatisfactory thing and a pre-

vailing evil; for what is the practice of man 22

with respect to all his labour and the ideas of

his mind in which he employs himself under the

sun? that all his days are wearisome, and his 23

occupation vexatious, so that even in the night

^e Heb. "There is a man, &c."

24 his mind rests not, while it is all in vain. It is no great good for a man to eat and drink, and enjoy himself in his employment: and even this I
25 perceived to be from the hand of God *alone*; (for
26 who shall eat, and enjoy, if I could not?) but that it is to him who is good in His sight that He gives wisdom, and knowledge, and enjoyment: while to the sinner He assigns the occupation of accumulating and amassing *wealth* to resign *it* to him who is good in the sight of God: and this was unsatisfactory, and a mere windy notion.

THE SIXTH SECTION.

He now develops the true theory which he had arrived at after the doubts and experiments detailed above. He shews the fruitlessness of excessive diligence and anxiety about worldly things from the consideration that every thing happens in its own appointed time according to a decree of the most High, who has pre-ordained from eternity what is to happen at each moment, and what employment each individual is to perform, so as for the best final result to be produced. That such being the case, every thing must be looked on in the most cheerful light as excellent in its own season; and our true happiness is to be cheerful in the employment allotted to us, and if we are also blessed with bodily comforts and enjoyments, and so enabled to be cheerful, to be thankful for

them as the gift of God, who has immutably fixed the whole order of events, and willed that such should be our condition. So far from allowing that the existence of wrong and violence and the imperfect recompense of the good and bad in this life constitute an objection against this absolute superintendance of divine wisdom, he shews that we are thereby furnished with the most cogent argument for the certainty of a future state of retribution, observing that it is better so inferred than from the common opinion of the superiority given to men over beasts; since with respect to outward and prima facie appearances, they are really all on a level; and as to their intellectual parts and the respective natures and destinies of them, that is too subtle a speculation for any but the most acute; so that on the ground of that opinion alone the common conclusion of mankind might well be, that the future being so uncertain they had best enjoy what manifestly is their portion here.

CHAP.
III.

THERE is an appointed time and a season for 1
every business under the sun: a time for 2
bringing forth, and a time to die; a time to plant,
and a time to abstain from planting; a time to 3
kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down,
and a time to build up; a time to mourn, and a 4
time to laugh; a time to lament, and a time to
dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time 5
to collect stones; a time to embrace, and a time
to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a 6

time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw
 7 away; a time to rend, and a time to sew together;
 8 a time to be silent, and a time to speak; a time
 to love, and a time to hate; a time to make war,
 and a time to be at peace.

9 What advantage then has the active man in
 10 his labour? I contemplated the occupation which
 God has given *an impulse* to the sons of men to
 11 be engaged in; that He has made it all excellent
 in its season, and has even implanted in their heart
 the love of the present life^a, so that a man cannot ^{*Or, "the world."}
 but find the employment, which God has appointed
 12 *for him* from beginning to end. I found then that
 there is no good for them, but in *each* being
 13 cheerful, and doing good in his life; and besides
 that every one who eats and drinks and sees good
 effected by all his labour, *to him* it is the gift of
 14 God; for I know that all that God appoints is
 fixed for ever, that none can add to it, and none
 diminish from it, and that God has so appointed
 it in order that men might fear before Him *alone*;
 15 that as that which has been has already taken place,
 so that which will be is as though it had already
 taken place; and that it is God who requires the
 recurrence of the past^b.

16 But again, I saw under the sun, that as for
 the place of justice, injustice was there; and as for
 17 the place of righteousness, wrong was there; where-
 fore I said to myself, God will judge the righteous
 and the wicked, for there is a doom there^c for
 18 every business and for every action.—Respecting
 the saying of the sons of men, that God has chosen^d

^a Literally,
 "God re-
 quires the
 pursued."
 i. e. "the
 past which
 is pursued
 by the
 future."

^b i. e. "be-
 yond the
 grave."

^c i. e. "dis-
 tinguished
 them by
 his espe-
 cial
 choice."

thein, I argued with myself that they ought to see that by themselves they are but beasts; for that 19 the sons of men are *creatures of* chance, and the beasts are *creatures of* chance, and the same chance happens to them; the death of the one is like the death of the other, and they have both the same breath of life; and that man has no superiority over the beast, for that both of them are as a mere breath; that both go to the same place, 20 both are from the dust, and both are returning to the dust; that he only who hath understanding 21 understands about the spirit of man that it goes upwards, and the life of the beast that it goes down to the earth; so that I concluded^e that no- 22

^e Literally,
“saw.”

^f Heb. “his profit,” i.e., “delight, the profit derived from his employment.”
^g i. e., “In order to derive the above conclusion.”

CHAP. IV.
I therefore returned^g to the contemplation of all the oppressions which are done under the sun, and, behold! the weeping of the oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of the oppressors there was power, so that they had none to comfort them; and I was ready to praise² the state of the deceased in that they were already dead, more than that of the living because they³ were still alive, and as better than either his who had not yet been, because he had not seen the evil deeds done under the sun.

THE SEVENTH SECTION.

He now proceeds to give precepts of practical wisdom and duty. He recommends a middle course between that excessive exertion of which envy is the origin and consequence; and the indolence of the man who devours his patrimony till he has nothing left. He points out the folly of the solitary miser, the advantage of marriage and social intercourse, and the vanity of ambition as exhibited in the fickleness of popular favour.

4 I HAVE also seen with respect to all industry, and
5 all successful work, that it is *inseparable from*^a each man's jealousy of his neighbour; so that that too is a mere breath and windy notion. The fool
6 folds his hands, and devours as it were his own flesh. A quiet handful is better than both hands full of trouble and a mere windy notion.

7 And I returned to the contemplation of what is vain under the sun. There is the solitary man,
8 who has none connected with him^b, and has no son or brother, and yet of all whose labour there is no end, and whose eye is never satisfied with wealth; and, if I were he, for whom should I be toiling and denying myself enjoyment? This too
9 then is a vain thing, and bad^c employment. Two are better off than one alone, because they are well
10 rewarded for their labour. For should they fall, the one will lift up his companion; but woe to the single man should he fall! because there is no

^a Heb. “is, consists in, each man’s envy of his neighbour.”

^b Heb. “and there is no second.”

^c Masora, “employment of a bad man.”

second person to raise him up. Also, if two lie ¹¹ together, they will be warm: but how shall the single man^d have warmth? And should an individual offer violence to either of the two, they will both stand up against him; and a triple cord is not quickly broken.

“An indigent but wise youth is better than ¹³ an old and foolish king, who is too old to be advised, even though he have come out of a house ¹⁴ of bondmen, for he too who is born in his royalty is born poor.” Thus have I seen ‘all the people, ¹⁵ that walk under the sun, *taking part* with the youth next in succession, who is to stand up after him. *For* it seems to all the people that there ¹⁶ is no end to all that^e is in their own time; and yet the next generation will not take delight in him; but this too is a mere breath and windy notion.

^a A phrase for “the existing government.”

THE EIGHTH SECTION.

He inculcates the duty of profound reverence in the worship of God with the punctual payment of vows, and of avoiding the ostentatious and wordy petitions of the wicked. As a next step to the fear of God, he teaches submission without murmur to existing governments, and shews that defects in their administration are not rashly to be laid to the fault of the king. The painful responsibility of kingly station reminds him of the vanity of large possessions and trains of

dependants. He shews that the head of a large domain cannot enjoy it all himself, for that his wealth is divided among others; nay, that his very rank and luxury are a burden to him; and that in many cases his elevation makes him a mark for the plots of villains, who strip him at last of all that it had cost him so much pain and self-denial to acquire. How much better then, he concludes, than this selfish anxiety which so often ends in disappointment, is a spirit of cheerful and benevolent contentment mingled with thankfulness for whatever superfluities it may be our lot to possess! To induce us thereto, he reminds us that life is short, and that God intends us to be happy.

- 1 BE circumspect^a when thou goest into the house <sup>• Heb.
“Keep thy
foot.”</sup> of God; and to draw near to hear is better than the sacrificing of the fools, *of the fools, I say,* for they know not that they are doing wickedness. Be not rash with thy mouth, and even in thy mind be not in haste to utter a word before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few. For as a dream is made up^b of a multitude of matters^c; so is the <sup>• Heb.
“comes
in,” i. e.
“in conse-
quence
of,” or,
“under
the form
of.”</sup> prayer^d of a fool of a multitude of expressions^e.
- 4 When thou vowest a vow to God, defer not to pay it; for there is nothing pleasing to God in <sup>• “Uncon-
nected and
irrele-
vant.”</sup> fools: pay that thou vowest. It is better that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest <sup>• Heb.
“voice.”</sup> vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause

[•] Heb. "thy thee^e to sin; nor say to the priest, that it was flesh."
[†] "a mistake."
[‡] Heb.
[§] "voice."
[¶] Heb.
^{||} Heb.
[¶] "dreams
and
vani-
ties."
^{*} Literally,
^{**} "are
many,"
^{i. e.}
^{***} "may," or
^{"should}
^{be many}
^{without}
<sup>inpro-
priety."</sup>

an oversight^f: why should God be provoked by thy words^g to^h destroy the work of thy hands? For in the multitude of dreamyⁱ and vain matters^j words also may^k be multiplied: but of God stand thou in awe.

If thou seest in a province oppression of the⁸ poor, and perversion of justice and right, be not surprised at the matter; for the great are one above the other in office, and there are great ones *again* above them; and the excellence of a country is in the entire state of it; *even* the master of a field is served *by others*. As he who loves¹⁰ money will not be satisfied with money; so he who delights in a retinue has no advantage from it; for that too is a vain thing. For in the in-¹¹

^l Heb. "eat it."
^m i. e. "the pleasure of looking on."
ⁿ Literally, "a sickly evil," i. e. "a moral disease," or "defect," according to some, "a prevailing evil."
^o Masora, "The design of a villain."

crease of property those who live^l upon it are also increased; and what advantage has the owner of it, except the^m looking on with his eyes? The¹² sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat much or little: but the satiety of a rich man suffers

him not to sleep. There is a soreⁿ evil I have¹³ seen under the sun, riches kept to the injury of their owner, when those riches perish through a nefarious^o design, and the son he has begotten¹⁴ has nothing *left* in his hand; that as he came¹⁵ out of his mother's womb naked, he should return as he came, and acquire nothing by his labour which he may carry away in his hand. This, *I*¹⁶ say, is also a sore evil, that exactly as he came so he should depart: and what advantage is it then to him that he labour for wind? and, be-

17 sides, that all his days he eat *as it were* in the dark, and suffer anxiety, and illness and peevishness should be upon him?

18 What I saw then to be good, what *I saw* to be excellent, is for a man to eat and drink and see good *effected* by means of all his labour which he does under the sun during the term of his lifetime which God has given him, for that that is his
19 *only profit from it*; and that as for every one to whom God has given wealth and riches, and enabled him to eat of them and to obtain that profit
from them, and to be cheerful in the midst of
20 his labour, this is the gift of God *to him*; for let him remember that the days of his life are not many, and that God responds to the cheerfulness of his heart.

THE NINTH SECTION.

It occurred to him, however, in the way of objection against the goodness of God, that frequently, when he appears to have put within a man's reach every sort of earthly happiness which wealth can confer, he permits him not all his life to enjoy it, but keeps him toiling incessantly and insatiably; and in the same way with respect to the literary man, though he attain to much information he never satisfies himself with it, but seems condemned to go on amassing fresh stores of knowledge, without being able to apply what he has already ac-

quired to smooth the path of life. In answer to these discontented reflections, he shews that the overruling providence of God orders all things for the best, and that those circumstances which at first sight appear less cheerful and flattering, are often really the best for us, and as such would be preferred by the wise man. He therefore recommends contentment, patience, and resignation to the Divine will.

CHAP.
VI.

“**T**H^ERE is, however, an evil I have seen under ¹ the sun to be very prevalent on mankind.

*The case of the man to whom God gives wealth ² and riches and honour, and who wants nothing for himself of all that he could desire, and yet God enables him not to enjoy it, but a stranger enjoys it. This, *I say*, is an unsatisfactory thing, and a bad defect. If such a man beget a hundred chil-* ³

dren and live many years, and the days of his

• Heb. “his soul is not satisfied.” *years be many, while he never^a has full enjoyment of that prosperity *himself*, and no honourable burial is his, I should say an untimely birth is better off than he. For since the untimely birth ⁴ comes forth in vain, and goes away in darkness, and its name is buried in darkness, and besides it ⁵*

^b “of prosperity”? *has not seen or known the sun^b, it has more ⁶ tranquillity than he; and even had he lived twice*

^c Heb. “all the labour of man is for his mouth.” *a thousand years without enjoying prosperity, do they not both go to the same place? As man ⁷ is^c always labouring to supply his mouth, so his*

8 mind too is never satisfied ; for what advantage has the wise man above the fool ? what *good* is it to the indigent man who hath understanding
 9 to be actively struggling against life ? the mere satisfaction^d of the eyes is better than *that* activity of the mind ; so that it likewise is as a vain and
 windy notion." ^{d Heb. "the sight of the eyes."}

10 Whatever it has been, the condition of each was already fixed, and it was known what each man was to be, so that he cannot enter into judgment
 11 with Him who is stronger than he. For there are many things which *only* increase vanity ; what is
 12 the advantage of them to man ? For who knows what is good for man in life, during the days of his transitory life, that he should make them as his ^{ap.}
 I. shelter, since who shall tell a man what *calamity*
 1 may be awaiting^e him under the sun ? A good ^{e Literally, "behind him."} name may be better than precious ointment ; and the day of *one's* death better than the day of one's
 2 birth. It may be better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting,
 since that^f is the end of every man, and the ^{i. e. "mourning at his funeral."}
 3 living will lay it to heart *there*. Sorrow^g may be ^{g Or, " vexation."} better than laughter, for in sadness of countenance
 4 the heart may be cheerful. The thought^h of the ^{h Heb. "heart."}
 wise man is in the house of mourning, and the
 5 thought of fools in the house of mirth. It may be better to listen to the rebuke of a wise man,
 than for one to be listening to the song of *praise*
 6 of fools. For as the noise of thorns under the pot,
 7 so is the joking of fools ; it also is in vain ; for the oppression of *fools* will drive a wise man mad, but

¹ Literally,
“libera-
lity.” their kindness¹ will break his heart. The end of ⁸ a thing may be better than its beginning, and the patient better off than the high spirited. Be not ⁹ hasty to feel vexation in thy mind; for vexation rests *only* in the bosom of fools. Say not, How ¹⁰ was it that the former days were better than

² Heb. “out of wisdom.” these? for thou wouldest not have asked wisely^k about this. Wisdom is valuable along with an ¹¹ inheritance, but of superior value for those who see the sun; “for *to be* under the shelter of wisdom ¹² *is to be* under the shelter of money,” but the superiority of knowledge is that wisdom can maintain its owner *by itself*. Contemplate the appointments ¹³ of God; for who can set right what He has made perverted^l? In the day of prosperity continue in ¹⁴ *what is good*^m; and in the day of adversity observe! God hath made the oneⁿ to balance^o the other^p, in order that men might not find out anything against Him.

¹ Or,
“crook-
ed.”
² Heb. “be
in good.”
³ Adversity.
⁴ Literally,
“exactly
corre-
sponding
to.”
⁵ Prospe-
ri-
ty.

THE TENTH SECTION.

He says that in the present state of the world we do not always find justice and injustice meet with their due rewards; nay more, that the perfection of wisdom and justice can neither be looked for in others nor affected in ourselves, unless we would overwhelm ourselves with disappointment and vexation, and that we had therefore best adopt a middle course of forbearance and moderation. The investigation

of the primary cause of this unavoidable admixture of evil in human affairs he confesses to be a subject beyond his grasp. He tells us he therefore sought to discover its secondary causes, assuming sin to be the fruit of human folly and ignorance ; and that this maxim, combined with the observation he had made on female depravity, had led him to the opinion that carnal desire, as confounding the distinctions between real and apparent or present good, is a general source of wickedness. Another source of it which he had noticed, was the progress of human invention and science, which generate and foster envy and other bad passions in the human breast. He concludes however with the remark that if we understood this subject aright, we should certainly see no reason to repine at the Divine appointment in this matter, but should be always cheerful and happy in the contemplation of it.

- 15 **B**OOTH these cases have I seen in my transitory life; the just man perishing in his justice, and
 16 the wily man living long^a in his evil way. Look not ^{a Heb.} ^{b prolonging."} for justice^b too much, nor affect superior penetra-
 17 tion; why shouldest thou destroy thyself^c? Be ^{b Heb. "be not too just," i. e. "do not look for too much justice in thy dealings with others."}
 18 not too wily, nor be simple to an extreme; why
 19 shouldest thou perish prematurely? It is best for ^{c Or, "be destroyed."} thee to retain a hold on the one course, and at the same time not to withdraw thy hand from the other; for he who fears God will come out of both extremes. This maxim will be confirmed to a

^a Literally,
"thy
mind."

wise man from any ten rulers that have been in a city, that there is no just man in the world, ²⁰ who does right and never does wrong. Still do ²¹ not give attention^d to all that they say, so as not to hear it if thy servant speak lightly of thee; for thou knowest in thine own mind that thou too ²² hast often spoken lightly of others.

All this I examined philosophically; I thought ²³ I should understand it, but it was far removed from me. The past^e is remote and very deep^f; ²⁴ who shall find it out? So I turned myself to ²⁵ ascertain and investigate and seek out a wise explanation and a theory, so as to understand how wickedness is *the result of ignorance, and madness*

^a "Woman"
and "ma-
lignant"
do not
agree in
gender in
the He-
brew.

^b Heb.
"snares
and nets."

<sup>i. e. the
method of
compila-
tion.</sup>

^g of folly. And I find woman^g to be *a cause of it*^g ²⁶ more malignant than death; for that as to her heart she is as nets^h and snares, and her hands as bonds, and he who is good in the sight of God, ²⁷ is saved from her, but the sinner is taken captive by her. Lo! this is a reason I found; compila-

ⁱ told it *me*; for fact must be laid to fact, to find out a theory. Since what I have long been ²⁸ seeking diligently I have never found: one man out of a thousand I have found; but one woman among all that number I have never found. Be- ²⁹ sides, lo! this is a reason I found; that God made man upright, but they have sought out many de-

CHAP.
VIII.

vices. He who is like a wise man, and understands ¹ the true explanation of the thing, the wisdom of that man will enlighten his countenance, and the cheerfulness^k of his face will be doubled.

^a Or, "con-
fidence,
boldness,"
arising
from a
cheerful
heart.

THE ELEVENTH SECTION.

He inculcates again submission without gainsaying to regal authority, reminding us that for kings there is a time of account, and that if they do not exercise their functions aright, God, to whom alone they are accountable, may punish them in this life with one of his three great plagues. He nevertheless allows it to be a matter of observation, that wicked men are often prosperous and in high authority to the end of their lives, and then buried with distinction, and good men oppressed and despised. And this notice of apparent maladministration in the world, recalls his attention to an argument he had already drawn from it for the existence of a future state, and he proceeds to enlarge upon it. He observes, that the imperfect recompense of the good and bad in this life is made by most men an argument for hardened impiety and voluptuousness; but that in reality, it is for the life to come that the full reward of the good is reserved; and why, he asks, may not some portion of the blessings of the present life be allowed to the wicked? as otherwise there would be no temptation to draw us away from the path of virtue, and consequently no claim to reward in adhering to it. He shews that the contemplation of this life alone can afford no explanation of the ways of God with man; and that we must therefore look at the

wrong; but at the same time the mind of the wise man knows that there will be a doom^c and ^{c Or, "time of account."} a judgment. For there is a doom^c and a judgment for every matter; for manifold are the calamities prevalent upon man; for he knows not which may befall him, since who can tell him how the future may be? There is no man who has power over the wind, to restrain it; and there is no *exercising* authority over the day of death; and there is no *certain* rescue in war; and restlessness will not save a man *from them*. All this I observed so as to be able to consider aright any case that occurs under the sun when one man rules over another to his injury.

But in fact I have seen wicked men to be honourably interred, and that they went in and out at the place of the holy man^d, while those who have done right are forgotten in a city: and this was unsatisfactory. Because no speed is made with the execution of the sentence on an evil deed, the sons of men are bold^e to do evil. But supposing that the sinner does evil a hundred times, and God is long-suffering to him; still I know that it will be for the good of those who fear God, that they stand in awe of Him: and may not the wicked man be prosperous or have a long life, which is still a mere shadow, because he does not fear God? It is an unsatisfactory thing which takes place in the world, that there are just men to whom it happens as if they had done the work of the unjust, and unjust men to whom it happens as if they had done the work

^d i.e. properly belonging to the holy man.

^e Heb. "the heart of the sons of men is full."

whole of his dispensations in this world and the next. The good and bad are liable to the same calamities and accidents here; and were it not for the anticipation of a future state, where all will be set right, the condition of man below would be sad indeed. We should then be living here without motive to virtue, and therefore full of impiety and folly, and after that go to the grave, a truly miserable end of a miserable life; for if death be annihilation the most wretched life is preferable to it; so that surely in this case we had best enjoy this life while we have it, and give up our whole minds to the attainment of worldly good, which, however, no human efforts can secure with certainty, since here below everything appears to be disposed of by chance and accident, and men are ignorant what prosperity or adversity may await them. The existence of a future state must therefore, as he has already intimated, be taken into account, in order for a satisfactory explanation of the present life to be obtained.

I ADVISE thee to observe the king's word, and ² an elevated person the subject-matter of the oath of God. Be not hasty in going out of his presence, nor be engaged^a in anything wrong; for he can do all he pleases; since the king's word is authoritative; and who shall say to him, "What doest thou?" He who keeps the commandment^b will appear not to know that the king's word is

* Heb. "do not stand," i. e. "persist."

^a i. e. "of God."

of the just. I thought that this too was unsatisfactory ; and I commended mirth, as that there was no good for man under the sun, but to eat, and drink, and be merry, and that this should continue with him in his employment, during the days of his life which God has assigned him under the sun, while I applied my mind to learn wisdom

^a Heb. "and in contemplating^f the vanity of all the business done under the sun even though men give their

eyes no sleep by day or night. So I contemplated the whole work of God ; for man cannot find out the part of it which is done under the sun, *by itself*; inasmuch as man labours to find it out, and never discovers it, and even if the wise man

^{CHAP.} thinks he understands it, he cannot *really* find it

^b Heb. "I had laid to heart."^g out. For I had taken all this into consideration^g, so as to explain fully how it is that the just and the wise and their works are in the hand of God, and *yet* that men cannot perceive either *his* love

^h Heb. "in all that is in their time."^h

that everything happens to each as to all; that the same chance befalls the just and the unjust, the good and pure and the impure, him who sacrifices, and him who does not sacrifice ; that the sinner is as the good man, and he who fears an oath, as he who swears ; and that this would be a defect in all that takes place under the sun, that the same chance should happen to all, and besides that the minds of the sons of men should be full of evil, and infatuation should possess their

ⁱ i.e. "choose whom you will."ⁱ minds all their lives, and after that they should go to the dead ; for that whosoever is chosen^j, all

people are sure *with respect to him* that “a living
 5 dog is better off than a dead lion,” because the
 living know indeed that they must die, but the
 dead know nothing at all, and so have no longer
 6 any reward, as though the very memory of them
 were forgotten; and their love as well as their
 hatred and their jealousy have come to an end
 long ago, and they have no longer any profit for
 7 ever from all that is done under the sun. Go
 then, *it would follow*, eat thy bread with cheer-
 fulness, and drink thy wine with a merry heart;
 for that God has already accepted thy actions:
 8 let thy garments be always white; and let oil
 9 never be wanting on thy head: enjoy life with
 the woman whom thou lovest all the days of thy
 transitory life^k, which God hath given thee under
 the sun, all thy transitory days^k, for that this is
 all thy profit from life, and from thy labour which
 10 thou performest under the sun: do all that thy
 hand finds in thy power to do, for that there is
 no action, or speculation, or knowledge, or wisdom,
 in the grave whither thou art going.

^k Heb. “life
 of thy
 vanity,”
 “days of
 thy va-
 nity.”

11 I recalled^l myself to observe that the race is^{l Heb. “I returned.”}
 not always won by the swift, or the battle by the
 mighty, or sustenance by the wise, or wealth by
 the prudent, or favour by the learned, but that
 12 destiny and chance befalls all of them; for that
 man moreover knows not his doom, like fishes
 which are caught in a fatal net, and like birds
 caught in a snare, like them the sons of men
 are snared in a fatal time, when it falls suddenly
 upon them.

THE TWELFTH SECTION.

Intelligent men, though poor, should be chosen as his ministers by a king. He illustrates this opinion by a tale. The wisest and best minister is he whose caution is always on the alert, and so avoids signal errors. If he sees those in office and high place who are altogether unworthy of it, he will rather acquiesce than try the dangerous experiment of remodeling a government. He depicts this danger in highly metaphorical language. Folly is finally contrasted with wisdom.

THIS instance of wisdom also I have observed ¹³
 • Heb. "and it was great with me." under the sun, and it has had great influence^a with me. There was a small city, and but few ¹⁴ men in it; and a great king came against it, and besieged it, and built great towers against it; but ¹⁵ there was found therein a poor but wise man, who delivered the city by his wisdom, and yet no one had noticed that poor man. So I said to myself, ¹⁶ Wisdom is better than might; though the wisdom of an indigent man is despised, and his words not heard.

The words of wise men, quietly spoken^b, ¹⁷ are better than the clamorous speech of one who bears rule^c among fools. Wisdom is better than ¹⁸

weapons of war; but one error may spoil much ^{CHAP. X.} good. As dead flies each of them cause the oint-¹⁹

ment of the apothecary to effervesce with a foul odour^d, so will a little folly him who is esteemed^e

^a Literally, "heard in quiet." i. e. whose harangues sway the minds of fools.

^b Heb. "causes to stink, causes to effervesce."

^c Heb. "precious."

2 for wisdom and honour. The mind of a wise man is at his right hand, and the mind of a 3 fool at his left. And even when the fool is walking by the way, his mind fails him, and he proclaims to every one that he is a fool.

4 If the spirit of a ruler be roused against thee, do not lay down thy office, for submission atones 5 for^f great offences. There is an evil I have seen ^{f Heb. "dis-misses."} under the sun, which *looked* like an oversight 6 proceeding from the ruler; folly was set in many 7 high places, and great men sat in humiliation. I have seen slaves on horses, and princes walking like slaves on the ground.

8 He that diggeth a pit may fall into it; and he who digs down a wall, a serpent may bite 9 him. He who cleaves wood may be endangered 10 thereby, if the iron be blunt, and he have not sharpened^g its edge, and so he *has to increase his* ^{g Heb. "polished its sur-faces."} force; but superiority of success belongs to prudence. If the serpent *once* bite, its bite will be without cure^h, and *then* the babblerⁱ will have no ^{h Heb. "spell."} ^{i Heb. "the owner of a tongue."} 12 advantage. The words of a wise man's mouth are "Shew favour," but of the lips of a fool, "Destroy 13 him." The beginning of the words of his mouth is folly, and the end of his speech is fatal mad- 14 ness. And the fool is given to much^k talking; yet ^{k Heb. "will multiply his words."} no one knows what will be *the consequence of it*; and who can tell him what may be awaiting^l him? ^{l Heb. "from be-hind him; fools."} 15 The labour of every fool^m will weary him out; ^{m Heb. "fools."} since he is as though he knew not the wayⁿ to a ^{n Heb. "to go."} city.

THE THIRTEENTH SECTION.

Solomon compares the misery of a country whose rulers are indolent and luxurious, with the happiness of one where they perform their duties aright. At the same time he warns against slanderous aspersions on those in power.

WOE to thee, O land, if thy king be childish, and 16
thy princes feast in the morning. Happy art 17
thou, O land, if thy king is noble^a, and thy princes
feast in due season, for strength, and not for drunk-
enness. Through indolence the roof of a house will 18
fall in, and through remissness of the hands a
house will drip through; to the derision of those 19
who acquire bread, and wine that cheers life^b, and
money that supplies everything^c. Blame not a king 20
even in thy thought; nor speak lightly of a great
man in thy bed-chamber; for the bird of the sky
may convey the expression, and the winged fowl
may report the thing.

^a Heb.
"son of
nobles."

^b Or, "the
living,"
"people."
^c Or, "an-
swers
every pur-
pose."

THE FOURTEENTH SECTION.

He recommends the active pursuit of merchandise and agriculture, without respect to the prognostics of divination.

MAP.
XI.

- 1 **S**END out thy substance^a upon the waters; for ^{“bread.”} in length of time thou wilt find it again.
- 2 Commit shares^b of it to seven *vessels*, or to eight; for thou knowest not what misfortunes may happen ^{“a share.”} i. e. “to each of the ships.”
- 3 on the earth. If the clouds are full, they will empty their rain on the ground; and if a rod falls northward, or southward, in the place where
- 4 the rod falls, there it will lie^c. One who watches ^{“i. e. ‘and that is all you can know from them.’”} the wind may *consequently* not sow, and one who
- 5 observes the clouds reap no harvest. Just as thou art ignorant of the course of the wind, as thou art of the formations inclosed in the womb of her that is with child, so thou knowest not the purposes^d of God who appoints all things. In the ^{“pur- pose.”} morning sow thy seed, and in the evening lay not down thy hand; for thou canst not tell which will prosper, this or that, or whether both of them will be good alike.

THE FIFTEENTH SECTION.

Solomon inculcates the duty of cheerfulness in the enjoyment of life, and especially of youth; but of cherishing likewise a recollection that they must quickly end, and that we shall have to give account of our use of them.

THE light also is sweet, and it is pleasant to the eyes to see the sun; for if a man live many years, he should be cheerful in them all; but he should remember also that the days of darkness to come may be many, and everything that has past fruitless. Be cheerful in thy childhood, O youth; 9 and let thy heart rejoice thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart and after the satisfaction^a of thine eyes; but be mindful also, that God will bring thee to account concerning all these things. And remove sorrow from thy mind, and dispel pain from thy body, for the childhood and morning ^{CHAP.} XII. *of life* are transient; but remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while as yet the days of evil come not, or the years arrive of which thou wilt say, "I have no pleasure in them;" while as yet the sun,² and the light, and the moon, and the stars, are not obscured to the sight, or the cloudy humours come afresh after the tears^b; in the day when the guards^c of the house will tremble, and the men^d of might will become crooked, and the grinders^e will cease when they have become few; and those

^a Heb.
"sight."

^b Heb.
"rain."

^c i.e. "the hands."

^d i.e. "the thighs."

^e i.e. "the teeth."

that look out at windows^f will have become dim, ^{i.e. "the eyes."}
 4 and the street-doors will be closed, since the sound
 of the grinding is low, and one will start up at
 a bird's note, and all the powers of song will be
 5 brought low, and they will be afraid of what is
 high, and the road will be full of alarms, and the
 almond-tree^g will bloom, and the grasshopper^h will
 become inactiveⁱ, and appetite will fail, (when a
 man is going to his eternal home), and the mourn-
 6 ers^k will be passing round in the street; while as
 yet the silver cord is not entangled, or the golden
 bowl broken, or the pail shattered at the spring,
 7 or the wheel broken at the well, or the dust re-
 turns to the earth as it was, and the spirit to
 8 God who gave it. Vanity of vanities, said the
 Preacher, all is vanity.

^g i.e. "the hoary hair of old age."
^h i.e. "one most active and nimble."
ⁱ Literally, "a burden to itself."
^k i.e. "the precursors of death."

THE SIXTEENTH SECTION.

Solomon states that much profit may be derived from the perusal of the compositions and compilations of wise and learned men; but more from attention to the practical suggestions of wise counsellors; and that excessive application to books furnishes no adequate reward to the laborious student.

9 **A**ND the more the Preacher^a became wise, the more ^{a Or, "Compiler."}
 he taught the people knowledge, and listened
 to it *from others*, and sought it out, *and composed* ^{b Or, "ar- ranged."}

many maxims. The Preacher sought to find out 10

^c Literally,
"written
correct-
ness of
words of
truth."

pleasing expressions and a correct^c style in writing words of truth. The words of wise men are 11 all like the points of goads, and *the sayings* of the authors of compilations like nails implanted;

^d Literally,
"been
given
forth," i.e. *mind*. But study more than these, my son, to be 12 well advised: making many books is an endless thing; and much useless study a mere weariness of the flesh.

THE SEVENTEENTH SECTION.

LET us hear the conclusion of the whole sub- 13 ject; fear God, and keep His commandments,

^e Or, "the
duty of
every
man."

for this is the whole *duty*^a of man; for God will 14 bring to account every action with respect to every secret *motive* whether good or evil.

ספר שלמה מלך ישראל

הפרקן

קְהַלָּת

LIBER SALOMONIS REGIS

DICTUS

CONCIONATOR.

סְפִרְתַּה שֶׁלֶמֶת מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל
הַקְּרָא
קְהֻלָּת

THE FIRST SECTION.

CHAP.
I.

דָבָרִי קְהֻלָּת בְּנֵי־זֹרֶם מֶלֶךְ בֵּירּוּשָׁלָם : הַבְּלָ

Ver. 1. "FROM this place to the 12th verse we have a sort "of introduction to this roll;" (this is one of the five books of the Bible called by the Jews, מִגְלָות, i. e. rolls, because they were always written on a roll of parchment.) "He states in "it the subject of the book, and what he is going to explain "in it.

"The word קְהֻלָּת is not a proper name, but a noun of "quality, and it must refer to Solomon, for there was no son "of David king in Jerusalem, except Solomon. And he was "called so, because he compiled (Heb. קִהְל) many wise dis- "courses of instruction, and eloquent speeches, or perhaps, be- "cause he was in the habit of delivering his addresses in the "public assembly (קְהָל)." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The Medrash derives this word from קִהְל, to assemble, "שָׁחַר דָבָרִי נִאמְרִים בִּקְהָל" "because his words were spoken in an assembly," as we find in 1 Kings viii. 1, "Then Solomon assembled (קִהְל) the elders of Israel, and there were assembled (וְקִהְלָל) to Solomon all the men of Israel," on which occasion he prayed for all the assembly (קְהָל); and the rendering accordingly would be "the Preacher," which agrees with the Septuagint and the Vulgate. But Grotius and the

LIBER SALOMONIS REGIS

DICTUS

CONCIONATOR.

CAP.
I.

SECTIO PRIMA.

1 SERMONES Concionatoris (*sive* “Collectoris”) Da-
2 vidis filii, regis in Hierosolyma. Vanissima, inquit

Arabic version take it, with Mendlessohn, in the sense of “a collector or compiler of wise sayings.” Others, again, derive it from a word of the same sense as the Greek καλεω, and render the phrase, “the words of one crying or calling out,” like the expression about John the Baptist, “the voice of one crying in the wilderness.” At any rate it is not a proper name; and its being in the feminine form is not an anomaly, as we have many such forms used as masculines, as Mephibosheth, Mespereth, Lapidoth, &c. I have chosen to render it “Preacher,” because this word is more familiar to the ear than such a word as “Compiler,” when inserted in the sacred text, and it is uncertain which rendering is the most correct. Still the word נָבָלֶת, when used as a feminine with נָבָרֶה, as it is in a single passage, must be rendered “compilation,” and it would therefore be more consistent to render it “Compiler” elsewhere. The passage where it is so used, ch. vii. 27, seems to have inclined Mendlessohn strongly to the latter rendering.

Observe that מִלְּפָנֵי is used with the preposition בְּ; we find it afterwards in ver. 9, with the preposition בְּ.

Ver. 2. “Every thing which you see on the earth is vain, “ void, and empty, so that nothing can be more so; and you must

Concionator, vanissima sunt omnia. Quæ utilitas 3
homini *contingit* omni labore suo quo sub sole fun-
gitur? Præterit ætas, venit altera ætas, dum moles 4

"not imagine that any one thing is an exception; for every
"thing is vain, and there is not under the sun any permanent
"substance, or real existence." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **הַבָּל** signifies a thing which has no solidity, like the breath which proceeds from a man's mouth; and the occurrence of the singular number in a state of construction with the plural of the same noun of quality denotes an intensity of that quality, with the sense that nothing can exceed the individual referred to in that respect, as "Hebrew of the Hebrews," "King of Kings." The word **הַבָּל** has the vowel :- under its first syllable, because it is in a state of construction. Now the absolute form is never found in Scripture except with six points, (thus, **הַבָּל**); and since an instance is not found of a word of six points, (that is, with two segols,) which changes its vowels in construction, it is necessary to conclude that there is besides **הַבָּל** another absolute form, **חַבְלָל**, **אֲבָל** which occurs in construction thus, **כָּאֲבָל אִם**, i. e. "Like a mourner of, (or for) his mother." As for **אֲבָל**, it is a verbal adjective from **אָבַל**, and signifies, "a mourner," and is not a participle. Very probably the (.) is put under **אֲבָל**, where we find a (.) under **הַבָּל** on account of the similar vowel under **מָאָ**, for the sake of variety.

Ver. 3. "All the diligence of the sons of men, and their
"labour and toil, is in vain and fallacious; for every thing
"takes place agreeably to a preordained decree which bears
"rule in all parts of the world; and as things have been, so
"they will be from the beginning to the end; and man labours
"to no purpose all the days of his life." Mendlessohn.

Ver. 4. "He begins with the four elements, and he says

הַבְּלִים אָמַר קָהָלָת הָבֵל הַבְּלִים הַבֵּל הָבֵל : מה-3
יִתְּרוּ לְאֶרֶם בְּבֵל עַמּוֹ שִׁיעַמְל תְּחַת הַשְּׁמֶשׁ : ד'ור 4

“with respect to the earth, (for that is the element called earth), “that ‘a generation departs’ and comes to an end; for the “plants and the living creatures and the bodies of men “return to the earth; and ‘a generation comes’, that is, the “plants spring up from the ground, and the living creatures “and the sons of men live on them; and by means of this “revolution the earth continues always of constant magnitude; “for all things that perish return again to the dust, and those “things that are generated afresh are generated from the “dust.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The word **הָזֵר** expresses not merely a generation of men, but of animals, plants, &c. What is here intended, is that the element called earth is going a constant revolution like water, fire, and air, without receiving any addition or diminution in bulk; and that the nourishment derived from the earth, after forming a portion of plants, animals, &c. again returns to the earth, and afterwards goes through the same process time after time. It is remarkable that the Arabic verb **كَلَّ**, evidently cognate with **הָזֵר**, signifies to go about, or move in a circle.

The word **הָלֵךְ** is used in Josh. xxiii. 14, and in 1 Kings ii. 2, to express “going the way of all the earth,” i. e. “departing,” as in this place. Observe that the word **בָּוֹא**, which here, as usually, means “to come,” is technically used of the setting of the sun, a sense more akin to the ordinary one of **הָלֵךְ**. See Gen. xxviii. 11.

The qualification introduced by the insertion of the words “the bulk of,” is necessary for the exhibition of the true sense

5 הָלַךְ וַיֵּרֶא וְהָרָץ לְעוֹלָם עִמְרָתָה: וַיַּבְחַק הַשְׁמַשָּׁ

of the passage, and is an important correction on the usual literal translation, which is apparently quite as inconsistent with the belief of Christians as derived from the New Testament, as the opinion combated by Maimonides, (vid. Prolegomena, p. 18) of the duration of the earth from all eternity, is with that of both Jews and Christians, as derived from the Old Testament. We say “apparently;” for when it is said, “that the earth is to remain for ever,” it seems to have been very naturally supposed by Maimonides and others, that what is meant is, that it is to remain for ever in its present state. This, however, we are taught by the New Testament to believe is not to be the case, and we may therefore reasonably infer, that such was not the intention of the sacred writer in the passage before us; nor would such appear to be his meaning, if the above be translated as I have rendered it. Similarly, the other passages which Maimonides quotes from Jeremiah and the Psalms to the same effect (vid. Prolegomena) may be so explained as to appear in perfect accordance with the prophecies of the New Testament. He there misapplies another passage of this book, viz., that in the third chapter, where we read, **כִּלְאָשֶׁר יַעֲשֵׂה הָאֱלֹהִים הוּא**, which unquestionably means, not “all things which God makes are stedfast for ever,” but, “all that he appoints,” “his appointments,” are “fixed for ever”; so that whatever argument he derives from these two passages of Solomon is based on mis-translation. In the other passages there is no mis-translation, but as I have already shewn in the Prolegomena, they may be understood differently from the sense in which he explains them, and yet quite as literally as he is disposed to take them.

Ver. 5. “שׁוֹאָף” is a word signifying haste, and activity. And “the received interpretation of this verse, according to the ar-

5 terræ stat semper eadem. Oritur quoque sol, et occidit sol, et ad locum suum illic, jam oriens, an-

" rangement of the accents, is of this kind. 'As the sun arises, so he sets, and to the place in which he sets, thither he is already panting to arrive, and darting his beams when he is rising.' And the order of the words agreeably with the accents will be שׁוֹאָף זָרַח תְּיוֹאֵל-מִקְומֹו, as much as to say, that 'the changes of the sun, (which represents the element fire) are also in recurrence, following in close and necessary connected sequence, his setting, his rising, his setting, and then his rising again; agreeably to the expression which the arrangers of our liturgy have employed, גָּלַל אָוֶר מִפְנֵי חֹשֶׁךְ כְּחֹשֶׁךְ מִפְנֵי אָוֶר' 'Rolling away light from before darkness, and darkness from before light;' and at the hour when the sun is rising in the east, he straightway begins to seek, as it were, with eager desire and to dart his beams and shape his course to the place of his setting." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The word מִקְומֹו has a disjunctive accent of the second class, and נָהָר a disjunctive accent of the third class, so that שׁוֹאָף must be taken with מִקְומֹו. In chap. iii. 17, עַת is in the same way separated from שׁוֹאָף which is used absolutely; and the construction is very similar to that in this verse; "There is a doom for every work, and every action there." Mendlessohn therefore renders the passage, "And is already panting for his place there, when he is rising (here); and so Michaelis couples נָהָר and זָרַח together, and renders them "Dum exoritur," or, "quum vix exortus est," and observes that שׁוֹאָף, as in verse 7, implies motion to a place, which shews that he does not understand the passage, as Rosenmuller and others do, "And is hastening to his place where he is (next) to arise," understanding שׁוֹאָף with שׁוֹאָף, so that the order must be

helans properat ; vadens ad austrum, et circumiens ad 6
 aquilonem ; continuo circumlit ventus ; et per cir-
 cuitus suos reddit ventus. Omnia flumina eunt in 7
 mare, sed mare non redundat : in quem locum eunt

inverted, and stand thus, שָׁם הַוְאָ וּרְחָא פָּלָמְקוֹמוֹ (אֲשֶׁר) where שָׁם אֲשֶׁר is rendered “in quo,” “ubi.” I have placed a semicolon at the end of this verse in the translation, and likewise at the end of the clause, “vadens ad austrum et circumiens ad aquilonem,” because, as Mendlessohn shews in his comment on the next verse, this clause may be either spoken of the sun, and joined with verse 5, or of the wind, and joined with the latter clause of 6.

Ver. 6. “He now speaks of the wind, which represents the “element air, and says that it also goes and comes in revolution. “For the wind is nothing but a strong agitation produced in the “atmosphere which surrounds the earth ; and since the atmo-“sphere is a rare and elastic body, this agitation does not con-“fine itself to one spot, but extends from place to place, till “it comes back in the course of its revolution to the place in “which it began ; and thus if the wind goes to the south, it “returns in its circuit to the north. And it is possible that he “may be speaking here of the wind which blows under the “equator, which is well known to sea-faring men, which always “goes the course of the sun ; and in the months of March and “September goes from east to west, and in the summer-time, “tends northward, and in the winter returns to the south.” (When the Hebrews speak of a south wind, a north wind, &c., they mean a wind which blows southward, northward, &c., respectively.) “And in this point of view the expression, “‘Going to the south, and returning to the north,’ applies “both to the sun and to the wind, because they both have “the same course.” Mendlessohn.

וְבָא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְאֶל-מִקּוֹםוֹ שׂוֹאֵף וּרְחֵה הוּא שָׁם : הַזְּלָקֶד
אֶל-דָּרוֹם וּסְבוּב אֶל-צָפֹן , סְבוּב , סְבֻבֵּה הַזְּלָקֶד הַרְוִיחָה
וְעַל-סְבִיבַתּוֹ שֵׁב הַרְוִיחָה : בְּלִתְנְחָלִים הַלְּכִים אֶל-

NOTE. If the first part of the verse be referred to the sun, it of course relates to his motion in the ecliptic to the north and south of the equator, in consequence of which motion, he is seen in tropical climates at mid-day sometimes at the north and sometimes at the south of the zenith, and between these times in the zenith; or if it referred to the trade wind, we must recollect that this always blows towards that quarter where the sun is vertical to supply the place of the rarefied air which its greater verticality causes to rise. סְבוּב סְבֻבֵּה is nothing more than our phrase, “round and round.” The trade-wind cannot be said to go round the compass, because it never blows from west to east; but, as Mendelssohn says in the first part of his commentary on this verse, the allusion may here be to the freedom of the air, and the meaning be that the disturbance once begun is propagated on and on, till it comes round the world to the same place again. It is remarkable that this passage in all its bearings corresponds with the results of modern science as to the motions and shape of the sun and earth, and the way in which the springs are supplied, &c.

Ver. 7. “All the rivers proceed from their fountains and “springs in the top of the mountains, and pour out their waters “one into another, till at last they all reach the great sea which “encompasses all the world. And such being the case we should “expect that the waters of the sea would be accumulating from “the creation to the end of the world through all generations “which go on multiplying through all time and at every moment; “but nevertheless we do not see the sea become full over all its “shores, so as to overflow its border and cover the earth; and con-

הַס וְתִים אֵינוֹ מֶלֶא אֶל-מִקּוּם שָׁהֲנַחְלִים הַלְּבִים
8 שֵׁם הַס שְׁבִים לְלִכְתָּה: בֶּל-הַרְבָּרִים יִגְעִים לֹא-
יִכְלֶל אִישׁ לְרַבָּר לְא-תִשְׁבַּע עַזְן לְרֹאֹת וְלֹא-תִפְלַל

"sequently the water too must necessarily go round and round,
"and return from the sea, (since that is the place he speaks
"of them as returning from,) to the sea, (since that is the
"place he speaks of them as going to); and this is effected
"equally, whether the waters return by subterranean passages
"under the mountains to their fountains, or there be contin-
"nually rising from the sea to the sky the place of the sun
"many vapours and mists which form the greater part of the
"clouds, and this vapour turns into rain-water, (~~on which ac-~~
"count we call the waters of the sea תְּקִוָּה, 'the meeting or
"collection of waters'), and pours it down, and from this rain-
"water the fountains are produced, and by these again the
"rivers are supplied, (since all rivers proceed from fountains);
"for as to the waters of the sea being bitter, and rain-water
"sweet, the fact is that the vapour when it ascends leaves
"the heavy particles of salt behind, and only takes up the
"sweet particles of water on account of their lightness. It
"is clear then, that all things in nature, viz. the four
"elements, fire, air, earth, and water, are always moving in
"a circle, and shifting through all time and at every moment,
"so that they are never left one instant in the same condition,
"but go the round of all those changes, till they return to
"the place where they were at the beginning of their motion,
"i. e. to the place they came from." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. Michaelis and Rosenmuller both agree with Mendelssohn in rendering אֶל-מִקּוּם שָׁהֲנַחְלִים הַלְּבִים, "ad locum quo flumina eunt," though some take it to mean, "unde ex-eunt." Rosenmuller joins שׁ to this clause, neglecting the

8 flumina, illuc eadem iterum sunt itura. Cunctæ res motu laborant; nemo id satis potest enarrare: sicut oculus visu non potest satiari, neque expleri potest

accent zakeph gadol. It properly goes with i. e. "illuc revertuntur eundo," "thither they go again;" for the participle in such constructions is used adverbially as in Psalm cxxvii. 2, "מִשְׁבִּימִי קֹם," "mane surgentes," literally, "matutinantes surgere." And again, "מַאֲחָרֵי שְׁבָתָה," "tarde," i. e. "sero sedentes," literally, "tardantes sedere;" also Psalm cxiii. 5, "מִגְבִּidi לְשֶׁבֶת," "superne sedens," literally, "supernans sedere," (where the ' is merely a poetical affix), so also chap. v. 14, "יִשְׁׁבוּ לְלִכְתָּה," "he will go again;" פִּסְפָּסֶף לְלִרְתָּה, "to add," is used in the same way, as בְּנָתָקֶף לְלִרְתָּה, "and she brought forth again."

Mendlessohn seems inclined to understand מ before שׁ in this place, as he says, מִן הַיּוֹם שֶׁמְשָׁם הַיּוֹם שֶׁבִים לְלִכְתָּה אֱלֹהִים, and would render it, "the place where the rivers go to, thence they return again." But, beside the anomaly of supplying or understanding מ where it makes the difference of sense between "thither," and "thence," the other rendering expresses the revolution of the watery element much more fully. Luther observes that Aristotle has discussed much the origin of springs and rivers, without throwing much light on the subject; whereas Solomon has given the only true explanation of it.

Ver. 8. "All things seem as if wearied and exhausted by "their constant labour and work, since they never rest or cease "a single moment in their destined task, but always go on "changing in a circle, as we have described; so that it is im- "possible for a mortal man to describe and explain it all by "utterance of the lips. And not only the elements which we "have mentioned, but the spirit of mankind is also in the

auris auditu. Quod fuit, idem futurum est; et quod 9 factum est, idem fiet; nec quidquam sub sole novum est. Si forte sit aliquid de quo dicat homo, ‘En 10 hoc novum est!’ jamdudum extitit priscis tempo-

“same state, and his senses are as though they never ceased from fatigue. For the eye is never satisfied with seeing, “and it is always in great desire to see what it hitherto has “not seen, as is known by experience. And just so the ear “is always listening, as though it was thirsting to hear, and “was never satisfied so as to say, ‘Enough.’ And consequently “the senses also of the sons of men are always at work without cessation, and changing at every moment.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Some commentators have rendered מִתְעַכֵּל “wearying,” “wearisome” in a transitive sense; but had this been intended it would doubtless have been put in the Pihel conjugation. Hurwitz renders it, “All things are in a state of activity, so that man cannot describe it all.” The meaning is, “Man cannot enumerate all the instances of constant motion and revolution of created things, just as the eye and ear of man cannot satisfy themselves with, or exhaust the objects of sight and hearing, but are incessantly employed.” The abruptness with which the latter half of the verse is introduced, shews that it must be a comparison, or simile; that “just as the eye and ear are never satisfied, so a man will never come to the end of speaking, if he try to enumerate all the instances of this sort.” This is much more natural than to suppose that Solomon meant to speak of the eye and ear as particular instances of this unwearied activity, immediately after stating that the instances of it are so numerous, that it would be useless to attempt to enumerate them. Mendlessohn however appears to understand the passage in this latter sense. The accents allow

אָזֶן מְשֻׁמַּעַ : מִהִ-שְׁחִיהַ רֹוֹא שִׁיחָה וּמִהִ-שְׁגַנְעָשָׂה 9
 הֹוֹא שִׁיעָשָׂה וְאֵין בְּלִ-חֲרֵשׁ תְּחִתּ הַשְּׁמֵשׁ : יִשׁ בְּבָר 10
 שִׁיאָמֶר רְאֵהוֹתָה חֲרֵשׁ הֹוֹא בְּבָר הִיָּה לְעַלְמִים אֲשֶׁר

us to render it thus, “All things that are toiling, one cannot describe,” or “How all things are toiling, one cannot describe;” but probably in this case בְּלִ-הַבְּרִים would have been preceded by אַתָּה.

Ver. 9. “Now since all things are going round and round, “it necessarily follows, that what has been in past time, will take “place also in future time; and that what has been done will “be done, so that there is nothing new under the sun; for that “all things return to what they have been, and from thence “proceed in a circuit, as though they moved along a circular “line which returns into itself. For all created things are “toiling either to exhibit a particular substantial form, and to “superimpose it on the works of God, or gradually to efface “such form, until it have disappeared; at least, all their opera-“tions relate to form and shape, the separating what is “united, and the uniting what is separated, the setting in “motion what is in rest, and the setting at rest what is in “motion; and consequently there is nothing new under the “sun.” Mendlessohn.

Ver. 10. “And if there be sometimes a thing of which the “sons of men say, See this! it is new; you must not attend “to what they say, for it has already happened in past time, “before we came into the world.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. We have here לִ before עַלְמִים. It is often put before words of time, and then means “in,” or “at;” vid. Prov. vii. 20; Job xxi. 30; Jon. iv. 7. Observe that עַלְמִים is here treated as if it were in the singular number, and is the antecedent to מִלְפָנֵינוּ. דַּיְהַ signifies “before us,” “out of” or

11 **תְּהִיא מַלְפִנֵּנוּ:** אֵין וְכֹרֵן לָרָשֶׁנִים וְגַם לְאַחֲרֶנִים
שְׁיִחְיֵוּ לְאַיִתָּה לְהַמִּזְבֵּחַ עַמְּשָׁנִים שְׁיִחְיֵוּ לְאַחֲרָה :

“before our time,” just as **לִפְנֵינוּ** would mean “in our time,” vid. Eccles. ii. 9; iv. 16. Thus in Ps. lxxii. 6, we have **לִפְנֵי יְמֵה**, “in the moon’s time,” i. e. as long as it lasts; **לִפְנֵי** being synonymous in this phrase with **עַם** in that immediately preceding it, viz. **עַם הַשְׁמֵשׁ**, i. e. “in the time of the sun’s existence,” “while the sun endures,” just as in ver. 11, **עַם שְׁנָנָה**, means “in the time of those who shall be hereafter.” **לִפְנֵים** however always means “formerly,” “before that time,” not “at that time,” vid. Deut. ii. 10; Ruth iv. 7; and **לִפְנֵי** sometimes signifies “before,” in point of time, as in Amos i. 1, “two years before the earthquake,” and in Eccles. i. 16, **לִפְנֵי** is “before my time.”

Ver. 11. “But in length of time the former times are forgotten; therefore, they say vainly of this thing, that it is new; “and so also the things which shall be in future times will have “no remembrance in the times which shall come after them, “and with the sons of men who shall be hereafter. Thus far “Solomon’s words are a sort of introduction. Now he begins “to explain in detail, about all the things that suggest themselves to the mind of man, that they are vanity and emptiness; “and the conclusion of all the investigations and all the “reflections and discussions, after you have heard the “objections and the answers to them, the argument and the “opposing argument, behold, this is the whole of man, to fear “God and to keep his commandments, as the wise man states “at the end of the roll.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Ver. 11 expresses the reason why some things are falsely supposed to be new, viz. man’s forgetfulness of the past.

If we understand **רָאשֶׁנִים יָמִים**, &c. we may also understand it before **שְׁיִחְיֵוּ**. If we understand **דָּבָרִים אֲנָשִׁים**, we must supply **יָמִים**, or **אֲנָשִׁים**, before the second **שְׁיִחְיֵוּ**.

11 ribus quæ ante nos fuerunt. Nulla est priorum memoria; nec erit posterorum quæ futura sunt ulla memoria apud eos qui postea futuri sunt.

It has been objected against the maxim, “There is nothing new under the sun,” that “the miraculous conception,” was “a new thing,” and that God says, “Behold, I make a new thing,” &c.; “I make new heavens and a new earth;” and again, “I make all things new.” But it is to be remembered, that Solomon here speaks of human affairs alone, and is merely stating that like the elements in their changes, human labour can produce nothing new, but must follow in a track already trod, so that the anxiety and toil of man are fruitless.

Observe that בְּרֹן in the beginning of verse 11, is the construct form of בְּרֹן, which occurs in the same verse afterwards, though Buxtorf, deceived apparently by the ה which follows, seems to have taken בְּרֹן also in his lexicon as an absolute form. The ה before רָאשִׁים is merely a sign of the genitive case, as we have in Dan. i. 1, בְּשֻׁנְתָּה שָׁלוֹשׁ לְמִלְכָות, “In the third year of the reign of, &c.” where שֻׁנְתָּה is the construct form of שָׁנָה, “a year.” In the same way we have afterwards at verse 9, מַלְךָ לְשָׂדָה, “owner of a field,” to which Mendles-sohn quotes as a parallel passage, מֶלֶךְ לְמוֹאָב, “king of Moab.” Again, in the headings of the Psalms, we have מִזְמֹר לְדוֹד, “a Psalm of David,” מִזְמֹר לְאָסָף, “a Psalm of Asaph,” and sometimes there is an ellipsis of מִזְמֹר, as in the heading of Ps. LXXII. לְשִׁלְמָה, i. e. “*a Psalm* of Solomon,” that Psalm being a Prayer of Solomon for himself, that God would endue him with wisdom, and a prophecy of the blessings which would thereby accrue to his people and kingdom.

For the sense of עַם שִׁירֵי, see the note on the last verse.

SECTIO SECUNDA.

Ego Concionator (*sive* “Collector”) rex fui super 12 Israel in Hierosolyma. Et applicui mentem meam 13 ad disquirendum et investigandum philosophice quæcunque sub cœlo faciuntur; hæc est molesta occupatio quam Deus dedit hominibus, ut sese in eâ

Ver. 12. “ ‘I the Compiler was a king,’ i. e. one who has “ the power and authority to do according to his pleasure; and “ ‘I was king over Israel,’ i. e. a wise people, and in the city “ Jerusalem, that nurse of wise men.” Mendelssohn.

Ver. 13. “The word חַנּוֹר signifies ‘to investigate and make ‘research,’ as in the passage below, תְּרַחֲנֵנִי בָּלְבִּדִּי. At first, he “ says, I applied myself to examine philosophically and to in-“ vestigate the condition of created things which are made under “ the heaven. For investigation is attractive to the sons of “ men, and men think now that investigation is the true and “ the real happiness of the intelligent man, and the substantial “ good, the final perfection of all that is good and desirable; “ as though man who is ‘born of woman and full of trouble’ “ could find rest and tranquillity by means of human investiga-“ tion; but in reality this is not the case, but it is a sad em-“ ployment. Now it is true, he says, that God has implanted “ the inclination in the heart of the sons of men to investigate “ and examine philosophically all that is done under the sun, “ so that they are always longing to know what they do not “ know, and to understand and comprehend what is concealed “ from them; but it is also true that it was the purpose of

THE SECOND SECTION.

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אָנִי קָהָלָת הַיְתִי מֶלֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּירוּשָׁלָם : 12
 וַיְתַבֵּעַ אֹתֶלֶבֶן לְרוֹשׁ וְלִתְוֹל בְּחִכְמָה עַל כָּל־אָשֶׁר 13
 נִעֲשָׂה תְּחִתְּ הַשָּׁמַיִם הִיא : עַנְיָן רַע נָתַן אֱלֹהִים

— — —

“ God, that man should not find perfect tranquillity in the midst
 “ of philosophy and examination into the productions of nature ;
 “ for investigation alone does not make the investigator happy.”
 Mendlessohn.

NOTE. *בְּחִכְמָה* is equivalent to an adverb, and signifies
 “scientifically,” “by the method of philosophy.”

The simple form of the word *עַנְיָן*, when taken absolutely, is
 spelt with a (†), as in the passage, *רָאִיתִי אֶת חָנָנִי*, and here it
 is necessarily pointed with a pathack (-), because it is in a state
 of construction with the word *רַע*, which comes after it. Mendles-
 sohn makes the *עַנְיָן* refer to the practice of philosophic investiga-
 tion; but this is somewhat forced. It refers more naturally to
 the “works done under the sun,” of which he pronounces the
 futility in the next verse, in order to explain his having said that
 it is a sad employment that God has given to the sons of men;
 for it is to be recollect, that all his reflections through this and
 the next chapter are of a gloomy and discontented kind, while
 in ch. iii. he speaks in a different strain. “The sons of men” is
 a general expression for the human race, whereas philosophic
 investigations are pursued by very few. However I have

14 לְבָנִי הָאָרֶם לְעָנוֹת בֹּו : רָאִיתִי אַת-כֵּל-הַמְּעָשִׂים
שְׁנַעֲשׂו תְּחִתָּה הַשְׁמֵשׂ וְהַגָּהָה כֵּל הַבָּל וַיְרוּתָהּ רֹות :
15 מְעוֹת לֹא-יָכַל לְתַקֵּן וְחַסְרוֹן לֹא-יָכַל לְהַפְּנִית :

preserved the ambiguity in the translation. Vide viii. 16, where עֲנֵנִי is used precisely in the same sense as in this passage.

It is clear that the words עֲנֵה and עֲנֵנִי are closely akin in sense, and that the first means “to be busy,” “to bestow labour on anything,” the second, “the business in which one is engaged,” and these words do not here imply distress or suffering. לְ expresses the object of research.

He here states that his research did not relate to God, or the angels, or anything celestial, but simply to terrestrial and human affairs, and to these only his conclusion refers, that “it is a sad employment,” literally, “an occupation of evil.”

Ver. 14, 15. “He says, After I had seen and considered “all that has been done under the sun, I found that the reflections of the sons of men were reflections of vanity, and ideas “of wind, which cannot profit, and cannot make happy. And “what profit has a man in all his diligence and labour? Behold, if there be anything perverted or depraved in his condition, it cannot be set right, and if there be anything “defective in it, it cannot be supplied; for it is impossible “for him to change his destiny; and, consequently, it is in “vain that he devises so many plans for attaining happiness.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. Verse 15 must be joined with 14, because verse 15 is included under the word הַגָּהָה, which expresses the result of his contemplations. Instead of retaining the Hebraism, “Behold,” the passage may be rendered, “Comperique omnia ceu halitum esse aut ventosam imaginationem, perversum non posse corrigi neque defectum suppleri.”

14 occupent. Contemplatus sum omnia negotia quæ
sub sole fiunt; et en! omnia ceu halitus erant, aut
15 ventosa imaginatio; non poterat perversum corrigi,

The word רְעֵית is of the form רְמֹות, “likeness.” This is the form of verbal nouns derived from verbs which have a quiescent ה for the third radical. It is always in the singular number. Its meaning is cognate with that of the verb רָעַה in the passage אֶפְרַיִם רְוִיחָה רְוִיחָה, “Ephraim has ideas of wind,” Hosea xii. 2. i. e. “His ideas are unsubstantial, like the wind;” or in the expression, Ps. xxxvii. 3, רְעֵית אַמְנָה, “Think truth,” or “Imagine ideas of truth;” for in both these cases the verb may either express “to think,” or “have ideas,” as it does in Chaldee, or else, “to feed on,” “pascere,” as it more ordinarily does in Hebrew; in which latter case it would be metaphorically used of the intelligent soul, because “thought is as it were the food of the soul, in which it luxuriates and enjoys itself,” as the Rabbinic commentator says; and the rendering of רְעֵיָן רְוִיחָה and also of רְעֵית רְוִיחָה would be “ventosum studium.” Mendelssohn inclines to the former rendering, “a windy notion,” “a fleeting and unsubstantial idea.” The rendering of רְעֵית, “vexation,” is entirely without foundation, as רְעֵית in Chaldee is the same as the Hebrew רָצָח, “voluit,” which would give quite a different and opposite sense, viz. “pursuit,” “object of desire,” “studium,” as above, and hence the Septuagint renders it προαιρεσίς πνευματος. הַבְל means literally, as we have observed, “a breath proceeding from the mouth,” and is frequently used metaphorically in this book along with רְוִיחָה, and both together may be rendered, “like a mere breath and windy notion.”

The substantive חֲסִירָה is of the form אַבְיָן.

nèque suppleri poterat defectus! Loquebar equidem 16 mecum, dicens, “En! auxi et propagavi philosophiam plusquam omnes qui ante me præfuerunt Hierosolymæ, et mens mea multam habuit philosophiæ scientiæque cognitionem!” Itaque mentem 17 adhibui meam, quum ad cognitonem philosophiæ tum ad cognitionem vesaniæ et stultiæ; comperi

rendered the latter clause of verse 15, “The defects could not be numbered;” but we should then have had **לִזְרָעָנֹת** in the plural number, and the parallelism, so necessary in Hebrew, would not be equally well kept up.

לִזְרָעָנֹת must signify here, as in Isaiah liii. 12, “To be reckoned with,” and “in addition to.” Now what is wanting cannot be reckoned along with what is present, unless it be “supplied;” but when anything wanting is supplied, it can then be reckoned along with the rest of its class, which before it could not be.

Ver. 16. “Then I said to myself, Behold, I have increased “philosophy by two methods of increase, viz. extension, and “propagation. For of the philosopher who by his genius invents “a new subject of philosophy, it would be said, that ‘he has “extended the limits of philosophy;’ and of him who teaches “philosophy to others, that ‘he has propagated it;’ and he “says, ‘I have extended and propagated’ philosophy above “all who were before me in Jerusalem.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. As Jerom observes, Solomon only says he was wiser than his predecessors in Jerusalem, not than Moses, Abraham, and the Patriarchs.

רַבָּה is in fact the infinitive Hiphil of **רַבָּה**, but is used as an adjective, and, as the Rabbinic commentator observes, is a noun adjective ending in **ת** and with a (·) under the last

דָּבַרְתִּי אֲנִי עַמְּלֵבִי לְאֹמֶר אֲנִי הָגַה הַגְּדָלָתִי וְהַוְּסָפָתִי 16
 חֲכָמָה עַל כָּל-אָשָׁר-הָיָה לִפְנֵי עַל-רוּשָׁלָם וְלִפְנֵי
 רָאָה הַרְבָּה חֲכָמָה וְרַעַת: וְאַתָּה לְבִי לְבָעַת חֲכָמָה 17
 וְבָעַת הַלְּלוֹת וְשְׁכָלוֹת יְדִיעָתִי שְׁגָסִיהִי הוּא רְעִיוֹן

syllable, and which consequently cannot receive a plural termination. In the same way we find **הַיְטָבָב** often used, as in Deut. ix. 21, adjectively, to express intensiveness, though it is really the infinitive mood Hiphil of **יְטָב**, “to be good.” So also in Prov. xxvii. 14, we find **הַחֲשִׁיכָם**, “mane surgere,” for “mane.” The two forms of the infinitive Hiphil of **רְבָה** are **רְבָה** and **רְבָבוֹת**, which are therefore also the two forms of the verbal adjective, and the latter is not the plural of the former. For the word **הַרְבָּה** is also used as a plural (as being a noun of multitude), as in the passage in this book, **בַּיְתֵי הַרְבָּה**.

It is remarkable that we have here, as in the verses i. 10, ii. 7, the verb **הַדָּחָה** in the singular number, where the antecedent is plural; we can only say that the class is taken collectively. On the contrary, in ii. 7, we have **כָּל שְׁחִיא**, and not **כָּל שְׁחָחוֹת**.

Ver. 17. “And now when I came to apply myself to ascertain the difference between philosophy, and madness and folly, I found that that too was a mere windy notion, for ‘that in the superiority of philosophy there is not any real ‘prosperity nor happiness for man.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The literal interpretation of this passage according to the accents is, “To understand philosophy *on the one hand*, and to understand madness and folly *on the other*,” that is,

רָזֶח : פִי בְּלֵב חֲכַמָה רַב־פָּגָעָם וַיּוֹסִיף בְּעֵת יוֹסִיף
מִכְאָכָב :

"to ascertain their relative merits," or, as I have rendered it, "to compare them." הַזְּלִילָות is rendered by the Rabbinic commentators, "The being bereft of understanding," and "consequent departure from the way of wisdom." We find respecting the word שְׁבָלָות the following remark in the Masora, that "every word denoting folly" is written with a ס, except one, which is written with a ש in the passage וְעַת הַזְּלִילָות וְשְׁבָלָות. We have several times, in the book of Job, the word בָּעֵשׂ, in the same sense in which בָּעֵם is elsewhere used, which is an anomaly of the same description.

Ver. 18. "For the more a man pursues philosophic research, the more is his vexation and trouble increased, since either from the small extent of his knowledge and his proneness to error he is disgusted with life at seeing that all his labour and all his trouble in philosophy and science do not bring him to his object, for that truth is deep, so that who shall find it out? or on account of the inconsistencies which he sees in the world, (hidden from the eyes of all living are the ways of Providence, in the accidents which happen to the sons of men both to the just and the unjust; so that many men of consummate ability have discussed this subject, and it is also noticed ever and anon all through this roll), or on account of the envy of others who hate and persecute causelessly the philosophic person; and the fool is safe from most of those annoyances, which may be on account of his little sensibility, as our wise men have said, 'The fool feels nothing,' אין שומה מרנייש, or because he is not so exposed to accidents and chances, according to their saying, 'Accidents

18 hanc quoque ventosam esse imaginationem. Nam in multa philosophia multum est tedium; et qui auget scientiam auget quoque dolorem.

"happen not to the fool,' אֵן שׁוֹתָה נִפְנַע ' And there is enough "in all this to shew the intelligent person that he will not find "real prosperity in human investigation." Mendlesohn.

NOTE. Just as בֶּל becomes בֶּל before a Makeph, רַב becomes רַבְּכָעַם, as רַבְּ.

וַיֹּסְרֵף דָּעַת. We must understand הַאֲשֶׁר before יָסַר. A similar abruptness of construction is found in vi. 12, where הַאֲשֶׁר must be understood before בָּאֵל, and in Prov. xii. 17, יִפְרַח אִמְמָנָה צָדָק, "He who utters truth shews forth righteousness," and elsewhere in that book; and Psal. cxxvi. 6, הַלֹּךְ יָלַךְ וְבָנָה, נִשְׁא מַשְׁךְ-הַזְרָעָב אֲיַבָּא בָּרְכָה וּבִי", which our version renders, "He that goeth on his way weeping, and beareth forth precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, &c." but which I prefer to translate, as well as the latter part of the Psalm, as a prayer for the restoration of Israel, "He that goes forth (as it were) weeping and bearing a basket of seed, as surely as he now does so, so surely let him come back again with joy, &c." (Aben Ezra renders מַשְׁךְ הַזְרָעָב, "a basket of seed.") The Psalm begins thus, "When the Lord brings back the captivity of Zion, then shall we be as in a dream (of delight). Then will our mouth be filled with laughter, &c." Then will they say among the heathen, "The Lord hath done great things for these." Then shall we be exultingly shouting, "The Lord hath done great things for us;" and then the prayer begins, "Bring back our captivity, O Lord, &c." The Biblical version makes the Psalmist pray for the fulfilment of that event immediately after speaking of it as having already taken place.

SECTIO TERTIA.

CAP.
II.

Dixi mecum, “Age quæso, tentabo te per voluptatem,” et “fruere jucunditate;” sed ecce! hæc quoque vana erat! De risu dixi, “Vesanus est,” 2 et de hilaritate, “Quid hæc facit?”

Ver. 1. “After I saw that in philosophy there was no “prosperity nor happiness for man, I said, I will cease from “the pursuit of philosophy, and constantly employ myself in “merriment; and I said to myself, Come now, I will try thee “whether thou canst find real good and happiness in mirth, “drinking, and luxury. Behold, this too was in vain. There “was not in luxury true happiness or felicity desirable for man; “but if man proceeds to a great degree in making merry and “enjoying luxury and constant mirth, in the end he will be disgusted with his life, and his mind will loathe merriment.

“**לֹכֶה נָא** is an expression for exhorting to activity and “readiness for action; and because motion in walking is a state “of activity, and sitting still one of inactivity, he expresses the “former by a word of motion **לֹכֶד**.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **נָא** means quæso, “I pray.” The Targum renders it by **בַּעֲתָה**, “now,” and Aben Ezra at Gen. xii. 11, says, **מָלֵה נָא כְּמוֹ עַתָּה**, i. e. verbum **נָא** idem valet quod, “nunc.”

Yarchi derives **אַגְּסָכָה** from **גַּסְךָ**, to pour out, and renders it, “I will pour out wine with joy;” and so the Vulgate translates it, “affluam deliciis.” But Solomon seems rather to mean that he intended to give up his mind to pleasurable sensations.

THE THIRD SECTION.

CHAP.
II.

אָמְרָתִי אַנְיָ בְּלֵבִי לְכָה-נָא אֲנָפְכָה בְּשֶׁמֶחָה וְרָאָה
 בְּטוֹב וְתִגְעָה נְסִיחָה הַכָּל : לְשֹׁחֵק אָמְרָתִי מְהֻלָּל
 וְלִשְׁמָחָה מְהִזָּה עַשְׂה :

The construction of קָה at the end of אֲנָפְכָה is the pronominal affix for the second person feminine, and the root is נָסָה.

The construction of בְ with נָסָה occurs also in 1 Kings x. 1, where the queen of the south is said to have tried Solomon with riddles, בְּחִידּוֹת.

הָרְאָה with ב denotes not merely sight and observation of the substantive after ב, but full enjoyment of it. Thus we find Ps. xxvii. 13, “Unless I had trusted to enjoy the goodness of the Lord (“לְרָאֹות בְּטוֹב” in the land of the living.” Psalm xxxiv. 13, “One who is desirous to enjoy good in his life-time,” אָזְהָב יִטְمִים לְרָאֹות בְּטוֹב. Ps. cxxviii. 5, “Enjoy the happiness of Jerusalem,” רָאָה בְּטוֹב יְרוּשָׁלָם &c.

Ver. 2. “And then he says of laughter, that it is an “employment void of understanding; and of mirth he says, “‘What doeth it?’ ‘What good does it bring man? It does “not make him happy or wise.’” מְהֻלָּל means here ‘infatuated.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. מְהֻלָּל is the participle Pohal. The active of this verb, i. e. the Pohel is used in Ch. vii. 7, יְהִלֵּל, “it drives mad.” This word therefore means, “driven mad,” “infatuated.” We find it in this sense in Psalm cii. 9, “Those

THE FOURTH SECTION.

3 תְּרִתִּי בְּלֹבִי לְמַשׁׂוֹךְ בֵּין אֶת-בָּשָׂרִי וְלֹבִי נַחַג
בְּחִכָּמָה וְלֹאֲחֹזְבָּנָה בְּסֻכּוֹלָת עָד , אֲשֶׁר אֶרְאָה אֵין-זֶה טֹוב
לְבָנֵי הָאָרֶם אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה תְּחִתְּ הַשְׁמִים מִסְפָּר יָמִי

who are mad against me (*מהוללי*) have sworn against me," i. e. "conspired against me." Dathe renders the word "magnum splendorem habes," according to the sense which it bears in several passages of the Psalms, where it signifies high excellence and dignity, and is applied to Jehovah. And in this sense the Rabbins took it in this place likewise, and were obliged to have recourse to a somewhat far-fetched interpretation, as Mendlessohn relates in his preface (see p. 78). Another reading of this passage is *מה הדעת*, "What doth it profit?" which the authors of the Syriac version seem to have followed.

Observe that *זה* is in the feminine gender instead of *הָ*, and its antecedent is *שְׁמַחַת*. So in ix. 13, we find *זה חִכָּמָה שְׁמַחַת*, "This piece of wisdom." Also *עַשָּׂה* is the feminine participle.

The expression used here of mirth *מה-זה-הָעַשָּׂה* may mean, "What doth it profit?" "what good does it do?" or it may be merely a phrase of checking and reprimanding, as in the expression, "Who shall stay his hand? or say to him, What doest thou?" (*מה תִּعְשֶׂה*), which occurs in this book, at viii. 4, and in Dan. iv. 33.

SECTIO QUARTA.

3 Scrutatus sum mecum quomodo corpus meum vino foverem, et, mente mea philosophiam excolente, ineptiam simul retinerem, usque dum viderem quidnam bonum esset hominibus quod sub cœlo facerent

Ver. 3. “When I saw that wisdom by itself only increases vexation, and merriment by itself does not make happy, I sought a method of effecting a union between them; to cherish and indulge my body with wine, (for ‘wine cheers people’), and while my mind was training itself in philosophy at the same time to retain the enjoyments of folly, that is, the lusts of the world; according to the doubtful conduct of a man who knows not where to find tranquillity and rest for himself; and he says, ‘I retained both this and that, till I might see what is the good acceptable and desirable for man.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **מִשְׁׁבָּח** is “to indulge and train at the same time,” i. e. to cherish. The Arabic **مسك** is “continere;” and from this word is derived **مسكك**, “food which renders the frame robust.”

עַצְמָה is a transitive verb; and **עַצְמָה** (“itself”) is to be understood after it, as the Rabbinic commentators say, so that **לֶפֶנִי** is a nominative absolute, “my mind training or practising itself in philosophy.”

אָנָּה is a particle, which when placed before pronouns or adverbs gives them an interrogative signification; and **אָנָּה** means simply “what.”

in numero dierum vitæ suæ. Magnifica mihi opera 4 feci, ædificavi mihi ædes, plantavi mihi vineas. Hor- 5 tos mihi feci, et paradisos, et consevi in eis arbores fructuosas omnigenas. Feci mihi stagna aquarum, 6 ex quibus irrigandum nemus producens arbores. Emi 7 servos et ancillas; habuique vernas. Item armenti et pecoris greges mihi erant majores quam cuique eorum qui apud me erant Hierosolymæ; congessi 8 quoque mihi argentum et aurum, regumque et provinciarum thesauros; comparavi mihi cantatores et cantatrices, deliciasque hominum, plurimas captivas mulieres. Et magnus factus sum, et plura acquisivi 9 quam ullus eorum qui apud me erant Hierosolymæ; insuper sapientia mea mihi adjuvabat (*vel* as-

Ver. 5. גְּבוֹתָה is from the root גִּבֵּן, “to shelter,” on account of the trees in a garden which shelter with their branches him who sits under their shade.

פֶּרֶס is a quadriliteral, evidently cognate with the Greek παράδεισος, signifying a pleasant garden formed into regular parterres.

Ver. 6. עַרְצָה צָמֵחַ עַזִּים means what we call in English a “nursery ground.”

Ver. 7. בְּנֵי-בָּית is a phrase used collectively in Gen. xiv. 14, and xv. 2, for “slaves born in the family,” “a household.” Large and small cattle are both called מִקְנָה, because they are the main part of human wealth.

I am inclined to think that in this verse and in 9, לְפָנֵי does not mean “before my time,” but “in my time.” See note on chap. i. 10. So לְפָנֵיהם in iv. 16, means, “in their time,” or, “apud eos,” i. e. “around them, and under their observation.” Accordingly I have rendered it in the Latin version,

חַיִּים : הַנְּפָלָתִי מֵעֶשֶׂי בְּנִיתִי לֵי בְּתִים נְטֻעִתִּי⁴
 לֵי בְּרִמִּים : עֲשִׂיתִי לֵי גְּנוֹת וּפְרִדִּים וּנְטֻעִתִּי⁵
 בְּהַם עַז בְּלִפְרִי : עֲשִׂיתִי לֵי בְּרִכּוֹת מֵימִס לְהַשְׁקוֹת⁶
 מַהֲם יָעַר צָומַח עַצִּים : קָנִיתִי עַבְדִּים וּשְׁפָחוֹת⁷
 וּבְגִינִּיקְיָת תִּיה לֵי גַּם מִקְנָה בְּקָר וּצְאן הַרְבָּה תִּיה
 לֵי מִפְּלָל שְׁהִוּ לְפָנִי בֵּירוּשָׁלָם : בְּגַסְתִּי לֵי גַּם-⁸
 גַּסְפָּה וּזְהָבָב וּסְגָלָת מְלָכִים וּמִפְּרִינָות עֲשִׂיתִי לֵי
 שְׁרִים וּשְׁרוֹת וּתְעִנְנוֹת בְּנֵי הָאָדָם שְׁגָה וּשְׁרוֹת :
 וּגְרָלָתִי וּהְסִפְתָּי מִפְּלָל שְׁהִוּ לְפָנִי בֵּירוּשָׁלָם אֲפָךְ⁹

"apud me," supposing Solomon to mean that he was the most opulent man of his own day, while in the English I have preserved the translation, "before me," i. e. "before my time," which the word *על* before יְרוּשָׁלָם compels us to adopt in i. 16.

Ver. 8. "סְגָלָת" is a thing much in request, and precious, "kept in a treasury, to take pride and delight in, and which is "only found in particular provinces." Mendlessohn.

וּשְׁדוֹת probably means "captive women taken in war," as it were שְׁרוֹדֹת; and this construction expresses "several," not an individual woman; like חַדְם וּרְחַמְתִּים, Judges v. 30, "puella et duæ puellæ," "several females;" שְׁגָה being derived from שְׁגָד.

Ver. 9. הַזְּסִפְתָּי. Either we must understand some such word as after this verb, and translate, "I acquired more than all, &c." "I became more opulent than, &c." or, if it be taken intransitively, we must render it, "I exceeded all, &c."

10 חִכְמָתִי עַמְדָה לֵי : וְלֹא אָשֶׁר נְשָׂאַלּוּ עַנִּי לֹא אָצַלְתִּי
מְהַם לְאַמְנָעַתִּי אֶת-לְבִי מִפְלָ-שְׁמָחָה כִּי-לְבִי שְׁמָחָה
11 מִפְלָ-עַמְלִי וְוְהַ-הִיא חֲלַקִּי מִפְלָ-עַמְלִי : וְפָנִיתִי אָנִי
בְּכָל-מְעַשִּׁי שְׁעַשֵּׂה יְדִי וּבְעַמְלֵל שְׁעַמְלָתִי לְעַשּׂות וְהִגְהָה
הַבְּלֵל הַבְּלֵל וְרַעַיוֹת רֹוח וְאַיִן יָתַרְנוּ תְּחִתַּת הַשְּׁמֶשׁ :

Mendlessohn observes that the expression **עַמְדָה לֵי** means, “It was an assistance to me, to help me to do works which had not been done before me in Jerusalem.” It may be well rendered into English, “stood me in good stead.”

Ver. 10. “I withheld not myself from any enjoyment, for “man has no advantage from all the labour which he performs, “except a merry heart, and why should I refrain myself from “mirth?” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **שְׁמָחָה** is an adjective.

The word **חֲלֵק** constantly means “the profit or advantage derived from any particular method of pursuing happiness;” in this passage **חֲלַקִּי** means “my profit,” “the profit I had in view in all my labour.” Thus we find it used in Eccles. iii. 21, “For that is his profit,” i. e. “cheerfulness is the only profit he can derive from his employment.” So also v. 18, a similar passage to the last. See also Psalm xvi. 5, and Psalm xvii. 14, “Who have their only profit in this life.”

Ver. 11. “Behold, after I had done all these works, I turned “to consider them again, to see whether man can find happiness “and prosperity in them; and, behold, all were as a mere breath “and windy notion, since in all these there is no real and sub-“stantial good under the sun.” Mendlessohn.

10 tabat). Ac nihil eorum quæ oculi mei appetebant iis denegavi; non cohibui animum meum ab ulla lætitia; animus enim meus lætatus est de omne labore meo, et hic erat fructus meus, quem ex omni la-
11 bore meo exspectabam. At intuebar in omnia quæ manus meæ opera fecerant, et in labore quo in peragendo versatus eram; et ecce! omnia ceu hali-
tus erant, aut ventosa imaginatio, nec quicquam erat sub sole fructuosum.

NOTE. פָנִיתִי בְּכָל מַעֲשֵׂי, the same construction occurs between וְאֶל יִשְׁעֵי בְּדָבָרִי שְׁקָר and בָּ. Vide at Exod. v. 9, שְׁעָה and בָּ. “and let them not look at (regard) vain words.” We find the verb פָנָה in the sense “to look,” in Exod. ii. 12, וַיַּפְנֵן כִּיה וְכֵה שְׁקָר אֲשֶׁר קִידְאֹן אִישׁ, “And he looked this way and that, and saw that there was no one” (near). Is. viii. 22, וַיַּפְנֵן לִמְעָלה, “And looked upwards.” We may therefore either render the above words as I have done in the English Version, “But I turned to all the works,” or as in the Latin Version, “Intuebar in omnia opera, &c.” “I looked at all the works,” or, “I looked among all the works,” i. e. to find satisfaction.

Solomon had now exhausted all the means of earthly enjoyment, without deriving substantial satisfaction from any of them. After this he continued for a while, as we perceive from the following section, in a desponding and querulous frame of mind, until the contemplation of the overruling providence of God convinced him that all our affairs are ordered by Him for the best, and that our highest wisdom consists in cheerful submission to His will in the performance of our respective duties. Vid. Chap. III. and Sect. vi.

SECTIO QUINTA.

Itaque convertebam me a consideranda sapientia 12
cum vesania et stultitia; quid enim faciet alter qui
post regem ad eandem contemplationem accedet? Id
quod dudum fecerunt (*i. e.* factum erit). Evidem 13
videbam tantam esse philosophiæ præ stultitia excel-
lentiam, quanta luci sit præ tenebris excellentia. Sa- 14
piens habet oculos suos in capite, sed stultus pergit
in tenebris; sed tamen ego intellexi quoque eundem

Ver. 12. “As much as to say, ‘I turned back from looking
“any longer for prosperity and happiness in all the works of
“madness and folly, though they be done scientifically; for there
“is no good in them; and say not “Perhaps a greater philo-
“sopher than you would do them in such a way as to make him
“self happy.” For what should a man do or try who comes
“after a king? What others have already done.’ The meaning
“of which is, that he cannot invent anything new which those
“anterior to him in time have not done.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Mendlessohn understands נִרְאֹת before לִרְאֹת, or else
renders, “I turned away (in despair) at the contemplation, &c.
as nothing was to be derived from it of any value.” We must
understand נִרְאֹת again in the last verse of Chapter vii. after לִבְדֵּי.

The expression “what they have already done,” is equivalent to “what has been done already.”

Ver. 13. “He is now returning to discuss a great and
“important question in the matter of philosophy and folly; and
“that is, that with respect to reflection and intelligence, every
“intelligent person must allow that there is a great difference

THE FIFTI SECTION.

וְפָנִיתִי אָנָּי לְרֹאֹת חֲכֶמֶת וְחַוְלָלוֹת וְסְכָלוֹת כֵּי 12
 מֵהַאֲדָם שִׁבְואָ אֲחִרִי הַפְּלָךְ אֶת אָשְׁר-כִּבְרֵי
 עֲשָׂוָהוּ וְרָאִיתִי אָנָּי שִׁישׁ יִתְרֹזֵן לְחַכֶּמֶת מִן-הַסְּכָלוֹת 13
 קִיְתְּרוֹן הָאָוֹר מִן-הַחַשֵּׁךְ : הַחֲכָם עִינָיו בְּרַאֲשׁוֹ 14
 וְהַכְּסִיל בְּחַשֵּׁךְ הַוְלָךְ וְיִגְעַתִּי גַּס-אָנָי שְׁפָקָרָה אַחֲרֵי

"between wisdom and folly, and that the superiority of wisdom
 "is as clear as the sun, so that no objector can possibly deny
 "it; (for the wise man sees good and evil, what is straight
 "and what crooked, and chooses by means of his intelligence
 "the good and right way, but the fool knows not how to
 "take heed and beware; 'he knows not at what he stumbles,'
 "and consequently the superiority of wisdom is clear and ma-
 "nifest of itself;) and yet that in liability to accidents there is
 "no difference between them; and sometimes the wise man falls
 "into a snare and the fool escapes, but generally the same
 "accidents happen to both of them. He now proceeds to
 "illustrate this difficulty in the following verses by means of
 "a review and examination of the actions of men and the
 "accidents that befall them." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. בְּכִיְתְּרוֹן is written for בִּכִּיְתְּרוֹן; for the letter בּ has become quiescent, and the vowel been taken up by the servile letter בְ.

Ver. 14, 15. "'The wise man's eyes are in his head,' i. e.
 "he understands in the beginning of any business what it will

15 יָקְרָה אֶת-כָּלָם : וְאַמְرָתִי אָנִי בְּלֵבִי בָּמִקְרָה הַכְּסִיל
גַּס-אָנִי יָקְרָנִי וְלֹמַה חֲבָמָתִי אָנִי אָז יָתָר וְדָבָרִתִי
16 בְּלֵבִי שְׁגָסְזָה הַכָּל : בַּי אָזִין יָכְרֹן לְחַכְם עַס-
הַכְּסִיל לְעוֹלָם בְּשִׁגְבָּר הַיָּמִים הַבָּאִים הַכָּל נְשָׁבָח
17 וְאַיְד יְמֹת הַחַכְם עַס-הַכְּסִיל : וְשָׂנָאתִי אֶת-תְּחִימָם
כִּי רַע עַלְיָהָם שְׁגָעָשָׂה שְׁגָעָשָׂה תְּתַהְמָשׁ כִּי-הַכָּל

"turn out in its end; but the fool walks as it were in the dark,
"so that he cannot take heed against a snare; and nevertheless
"I found that the same accidents may happen to both of them;
"so I said to myself that this too (viz. the superiority which
"wisdom has over folly) is also vanity." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Ver. 15. For other examples of used absolutely, vid. Note to viii. 2, infra. Compare in ver 14.

Ver. 16. "If you should say that it is an advantage be-
"longing to the wise man that he will be in remembrance for
"ever, and that he will make himself a name in the world
"as the great men of their nations and their kings have
"thought to do, who have waged great wars and formidable,
"and have done notable deeds in the world in order that their
"remembrance might be left to future generations; behold, this
"too is a vain idea. The wise man as well as the fool has no
"everlasting remembrance, but it lasts only for a little time
"and not many days; for in coming ages all will be forgotten,
"and if this do not happen in the very next generation, it will
"happen in a generation more remote, and at all events their
"remembrance will not remain to the end. Alas! how perishes
"the memory of the wise man with that of the fool! and both
"of them are as if they had never been." Mendlessohn.

15 utrisque casum contingere posse. Itaque dixi tecum,
 “ Secundum stulti casum, quod ad me attinet, mihi
 quoque casus contingere potest, et quid igitur pro-
 dest quod sapientia præcellam?” quamobrem dixi
 16 tecum hoc quoque vanum esse. Sapientis æque ac
 stulti nulla est sempiterna memoria, quandoquidem
 diebus venturis uterque dudum oblivioni datus fue-
 17 rit; et quomodo moritur sapiens stulti ritu! Itaque
 exosus eram vitam, nam displicebat mihi opus quod sub

NOTE. אֵין זְכָרֹן לְחַבּם “He has no remembrance,” i. e. “is not remembered;” זְכָרֹן is in construction, and לְ only the sign of the genitive case. Vid. ch. i. 11. עַם here expresses “equally with,” “like,” in which sense we find it in Ps. lxxiii. 25, וְעַמְקָד לֹא חִפְזָתִי בָּאָרֶץ, “And there is none upon earth that I desire equally with thee.” And in Job ix. 26, חִלְפֵי עַם אֲנִיּוֹת, “They are past away like ships.”

בִּשְׁנָם הוּא בַּשְׂרַע signifies “inasmuch as,” as in Gen. vi. 3, בִּשְׁנָם הוּא בַּשְׂרַע, “Inasmuch as also he is flesh.” We find בִּשְׁנָם in the sense “inasmuch as,” at Eccl. vii. 2, “Inasmuch as that is the end of every man.”

Before בִּשְׁנָם understand הַיּוֹם הַבְּאִים, as in 1 Sam. ii. 31, and Jer. vii. 32. So we had in Ecc. ii. 3, מִסְפַּר יְמִים, בִּמְسֻפֵּר יְמִים. נִשְׁבַּח means, “will have been forgotten.”

הַבְּלֵל signifies here, as in many other places in this book, “both of them.” Rosenmuller agrees with my version of this passage; he renders it “eo quod jam-pridem diebus venientibus uterque oblivioni tradetur,” or “traditus fuerit.”

Ver. 17. “Behold, this difficulty brings man to hate his “life in this world when he sees that he has no profit in all his “labour, for that all is a mere breath and windy notion in this “world.

sole fit, quippe quod cunctum ceu halitus esset, aut ventosa imaginatio. Exosus quoque eram cunctum 18 laborem meum quem sub sole elaboraveram, quippe quem relicturus sim homini qui mihi superstes fuerit, 19 (et quis scit sapiensne sit futurus an stultus?) et potitus erit cuneto labore meo quem tanto labore ac sapientia sub sole perfecerim; quæ res quoque irrita esset, (i. e. quæ hujus vitæ imperfectio esset.) Et conver- 20 tebam me ad desperare faciendum animum meum de omni labore quem sub sole elaboraveram. Est 21 enim cuius labor sapienter et scienter et optimo cum

Ver. 18. "Here is the second objection against the excellence and superiority of wisdom; 'Behold, I may labour and perform great works like a mighty king who possesses the power to do so, and to-morrow I may be dead and leave my kingdom to some one who may succeed me; and who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool?'" Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The word **לִמְלָא** is a verbal adjective from **לִמְלֹא**.

Ver. 19. "'And be that as it may, he will be master of all my work which my labour and wisdom have effected under the sun.' Here may possibly be allusion to the bad promise 'of his son Rehoboam.' Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The expression, "Who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool?" must be regarded as in a parenthesis. Where he says, "shall be master of all my labour," he means "the fruits of my labour which my perseverance and skill have enabled me to acquire."

Ver. 20. "So I turned myself to the resolution not to exercise any more forethought or anxiety about all my works, but to take a disgust to them, for that there was no profit or ground for confidence in them." Mendlessohn.

הַבְּלָ וְרוּוֹת רֹוח : וְשָׁנָאָתִי אָנִי אֶת-כָּל-עֲמָלִי, שָׁנָאָנִי 18
 עֲמָל תְּחִתְּ הַשְּׁמֵשׁ שָׁאָנִי חָנוּ לְאָדָם שִׁיחָה אָחָרִי :
 וְمִי יֹדֵעַ הַחֲכָם יְהִי אָז סָלֵל וַיְשַׁלֵּט בְּכָל-עֲמָלִי, 19
 שְׁעַמְלָתִי וְשַׁחַכְמָתִי תְּחִתְּ הַשְּׁמֵשׁ גַּסְיוֹתָה הַבְּלָ :
 וְסִבּוֹתִי אָנִי לִיאַש אֶת-לְבִי עַל כָּל-הַעֲמָל שְׁעַמְלָתִי 20
 תְּחִתְּ הַשְּׁמֵשׁ : פִּיְּשֵׁ אָדָם שְׁעַמְלָוּ בְּחִכְמָה וּבְרָעָת 21

NOTE. סִבּוֹתִי is an intransitive verb, signifying, “I came round,” “I turned.”

שְׁאָנֵשׁ is a verb in the Pahel conjugation, and consequently transitive; and the passage may be rendered, “I came to make myself despair.” The Rabbins used שְׁאָנֵשׁ to express “despair of recollecting anything.”

Ver. 21. “Here is another objection still stronger than “that which precedes it, and this is that even if a man think “with himself, ‘What have I to do with those that come after “me? I will labour and enjoy myself in my lifetime, and not “be anxious about what may happen after my death;’ behold, “even this enjoyment depends on a decree pre-ordained by “God, and not on the efforts or choice of man. And sometimes “one man labours philosophically and scientifically and suc-“cessfully, and another enjoys the fruit of it, as if the one “were made only to heap up and accumulate wealth, and the “other only to eat and make merry with what he has not “laboured for; and this is a great evil.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The word חַלְקָנוּ is inserted to explain what is

וְבָבֶשְׂרֹון וְלֹאָדָם שֶׁלֹּא עִמְלָבּוּ יַתְנִינֵי חַלְקָו גַּסְיוֹה
 22 הַכְּלָל וְרֹעֶה רְבָה : בַּי מַה-הַזָּה לְאָדָם בְּכָל-עִמְלָו
 23 וּבְרָעִין לְבּוּ שְׁהָוָא עִמְלָ תְּחַת הַשְּׁמֶשׁ : בַּי כָּל-יָמִי
 מְכַאֲבִים וְלָעַט עֲנִינוֹ גַּס-בְּלִילָה לְאָשְׁכָב לְבּוּ גַּס-
 24 זָה הַכְּלָל הוּא : אַיִ-טּוֹב בְּאָדָם שִׁיאָכֵל וְשָׁתָה
 וְהַרְאָה אַת-נְפָשָׁו טּוֹב בְּעִמְלָו גַּס-זָה דָּאִתִּי אָנִי

meant by leaving one's "labour" to another, that it is leaving "the fruit of it" to others.

The expression גַּס-זָה הַכְּלָל וְרֹעֶה רְבָה may be either rendered as referring to the man's labour, which he goes on to describe in the next verse as unremitting by day or night, and yet in most cases profitable only to his heir; or it may be taken to refer in general to the circumstance mentioned in the first part of the verse, that men often toil only for their heirs, and hence to mean "a widely prevailing evil;" and the next verse would express the frequency of such cases. I have adopted the latter sense in the translation. רב most generally denotes magnitude of number, but sometimes also of degree or intensity.

Ver. 22, 23. "Our Rabbins of blessed memory have employed הַזָּה as a word expressing habit and custom. Thus "they say, 'the thing usually (בִּהְזֹוחַ) written,' and so we "may interpret it here. He speaks as one asking a question, "For what is the practice of the sons of men with respect to "all their labour, &c.?" and he answers it for himself, 'That "all his days are wearisome, and his employment vexatious, so "that even in the night his mind sleeps not for thinking about

successu perfectus est, sed qui homini, qui non in eo laboraverit concedere eum, nempe fructum suum, debet; et hoc quoque res irrita, (i. e. vitæ imperfæctio), et magnum malum est. Quænam enim est consuetudo hominis in omni ejus labore et mentis ejus cogitatione, in quibus sese occupat sub sole? quod cuncti ejus dies sunt fatigantes, et occupatio ejus molestia, adeo ut ne noctu quidem animus ejus quiescat, *licet* hoc quoque vanum sit. Non est eximie bonum homini quod comedat et bibat et in labore suo sibimet ipsi voluptatem præstet; sed hoc

"his business; and though this too is vain and foolish on the part of those who so labour, nevertheless the practice of man is even so; and how then should it not be a great evil to him for another to enter into the fruits of his labour?"

Mendlessohn.

Ver. 24. "'Behold, it is no such great good or happiness for man that the only profit he derives from his labour should be eating and drinking and enjoying himself, but even this amount of good is not at the disposal of man, but comes from God.'"

NOTE. Rosenmuller would understand the passage אֵין טוֹב בְּאָמֶרֶת, "Non est bonum penes hominem," i. e. "His eating and drinking, and enjoying himself in his labour, is not a good in the power or at the disposal of man." This agrees very well with the following clause, "Even this I perceived to be from the hand of God alone," but it is unnecessary to adopt this forced rendering of בְּאָמֶרֶת, for טוֹב בְּ always means "good for." Mendlessohn's interpretation gives the same general sense without introducing this anomaly.

etiam comperi divinitus dari; (quis enim comedere 25
aut quis voluptatem sentire poterit, si ego non
potuerim?) sed homini qui ipsi placet dare Deum 26
sapientiam et scientiam et lætitiam, et improbo
dare opus colligendi et coacervandi quæ mox hic
tradat ei qui Deo placet. Hoc quoque irritum ceu
halitus erat et ventosa cogitatio.

Ver. 25. “שׁוֹר signifies, ‘to be in haste or activity,’ or
“else, as probably here, ‘to enjoy with the senses.’ ‘For if
“it came from the hand of man to have mirth and enjoy-
“ment in his occupation, surely I should have enjoyed myself
“more than all men, for there was no one to prevent me from
“doing what I pleased.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. חוץ מני. It is absurd to render this, “beside
me.” It means rather, “without me,” or, “exclusively of me.”
“Who shall enjoy, if I could not?” like the Chaldee,
בְּנִי.

Ver. 26. “‘But I find by experience that God gives to
“the man who is good in his sight wisdom and knowledge
“and enjoyment even without his labouring or toiling for it,
“and to the sinner he assigns the employment of laying up
“and amassing to give it them who are good in the sight of
“God; and truly this idea is a vain reflection and windy notion,
“for no one can see the difference between these two men,
“why one should be good in the sight of God, and the other
“be accounted a sinner. Therefore I turned to another theory,
“that perhaps every thing happens by a pre-ordained decree,’
“as he explains in what immediately follows.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Verses 24, 25, 26, are a somewhat difficult pas-
sage. Solomon has been describing his own repinings and
despondency on account of the fatal and unforeseen disasters to
which the wise and foolish are alike liable, and by which labour
and forethought may be frustrated in an instant. In verse 23,

כִּי מֵיד הָאֱלֹהִים הוּא : כִּי מַי יְאַכֵּל וְמַי יְחִזֵּשׁ
חוֹזֶם מִפְנֵי : כִּי לְאַרְבָּם שְׁטוֹב לִפְנֵיו נָתַן חֲכָמָה
וְדָעַת וְשִׁמְחָה וְלְחוֹטְאָה נָתַן עֲנוּן לְאַסְפָּה וְלְכָנּוּס לְתַתָּ
לְטוֹב לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים גַּסְּזוֹה הַבָּל וְרַעֲוָת רֹוח :

he says that in fact the enjoyment of the fruits of his labour cannot be secured by man, but is a gift of God alone to those on whom He chooses to bestow it, (as otherwise, ver. 25, he himself would have attained perfect happiness if any one could). This reflection leads him in verse 26 to suggest as an explanation of the apparently fortuitous condition of mankind, that since profit from labour is a gift of God, it must be the good man that He enables and inspires with the desire to use what his toil has acquired for the advantage of himself and others, and the bad man that he impels to be always accumulating what he will not enjoy himself but leave to him who is good in God's sight, which (as the last clause גַּסְּזוֹה הַבָּל וּכֹה might be rendered) is an unsatisfactory task ; but Mendlessohn ingeniously makes this clause refer to the explanation itself, and considers Solomon to be declaring it to be unsatisfactory and insufficient, as unsatisfactory as the fortuitous state of things which it was intended to explain ; for that since we are still ignorant whom God foreknows to be good or a sinner and regards as such, it may still be said to be a matter of chance to which class each of us belongs, nor is the uncertainty of our condition at all diminished by this view of it. In the next Section Solomon clears up the difficulty more successfully by shewing that there is no such thing as chance, that we are responsible creatures, that God has pre-ordained all events for our greatest final good, and that it is therefore our duty to be cheerful and content.

THE SIXTH SECTION.

CHAP.
III.

1, 2 לְבָל זָמָן וַעַת לְכָל-חֶפֶץ תְּחִתְּהַשְׁמִים : עַת
 לְלִדָּת וַעַת לְמֹות עַת לְטֹעַת וַעַת לְעֻקּוֹר גַּטְיוּעַ :
 3 עַת לְהַרְזֵג וַעַת לְרִפְואָה עַת לְפָרוֹז וַעַת לְבָנּוֹת :
 4, 5 עַת לְבָבּוֹת וַעַת לְשָׁחוֹק עַת סְפָד וַעַת רְקֹוד : עַת
 לְהַשְׁלִיךְ אֲבָנִים וַעַת בָּנוֹס אֲבָנִים עַת לְחַבּוֹק וַעַת
 6 לְרִיחָק מְחַקָּק : עַת לְבָקֵשׁ וַעַת לְאַבְדֵר עַת לְשָׁמֹר

Ver. 1. "He now proceeds to explain, by means of trial and examination, that all things happen according to a pre-ordained decree determined by God; and that consequently for every thing there is its particular time and fixed season, and that it is not in the power of man to defer or accelerate this season in its approach." Mendlessohn.

Ver. 2. "He speaks of the beginning and end of man, as fixed seasons, and says that there are such fixed seasons not only for man, but also for things sown and planted." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Perhaps לְקַת may be taken substantively for "birth," and the sense be "tempus partûs," scilicet "nativitatis." The antithesis is thus better kept up than by translating it "bringing forth." מַעַת is another form of the infinitive of עֲתָה, beside עֲתָה, beside עֲתָה, as if from עֲתָה.

Ver. 3. "A time to kill and a time to heal." He does

SECTIO SEXTA.

CAP.
III.

1 Sua cuique rei occasio est et tempus certum
2 omni negotio sub cœlo. Tempus nascendi (*vel* pa-
riendi), et tempus moriendi; tempus plantandi, et
3 tempus plantata extirpandi. Tempus interficiendi,
et tempus sanandi; tempus destruendi, et tempus
4 ædificandi. Tempus est plorandi, et tempus riden-
5 di; tempus est lugendi, et tempus saltandi. Tempus
est disjiciendi lapides, et tempus colligendi lapides;
tempus amplexandi, et tempus ab amplexu absti-
6 nendi. Tempus est quærendi, et tempus perdendi;

" not say, 'a time to make alive;' for there is no fixed time for
" that in the course of this world. His meaning here has re-
" ference to scientific operations, that these too have fixed times.
" For sometimes the skilful physician labours philosophically and
" scientifically and correctly to cure a patient and avails not,
" but well nigh does him more harm than good; whereas some-
" times when a physician altogether incompetent to his work
" proceeds foolishly and chooses for the patient a plan which
" is strange and quite foreign from the methods of science, the
" patient is nevertheless cured, merely because the time to cure
" has come." Mendlessohn.

Ver. 4—8. "A time for a man to resign himself of his
" own accord to weeping, and 'a time to laugh,' when he is
" ready to laugh at anything, and so also 'a time to lament,'
" and 'a time to dance.' 'A time to cast away'; even an accident

tempus servandi, et tempus abjiciendi. Tempus est 7
dissuendi, et tempus consuendi; tempus tacendi, et
tempus loquendi. Tempus est amandi, et tempus 8
odio habendi; tempus belli, et tempus pacis. Quid 9
ergo *rem aliquam agenti* prodest quod *in ea* labore*t?*
Contemplatus sum occupationem quam dedit Deus 10
hominibus ut in ea occupentur. Omnem eam fecit 11

“ has its own appointed season, just as there is a time ‘to throw away useless stones,’ and ‘a time to build up those which were thrown away’. ‘A time to embrace;’ even the sexual desire ‘implanted in the human heart has its own particular season, ‘for a man to embrace the wife of his bosom,’ and ‘to abstain from embracing her.’”

“(5) Stones are thrown away when a field or vineyard is cleared. On the other hand they are collected in order to “repair houses, strew roads, or inclose fields.

“ Here, as in verse (6), he speaks of what frequently happens in life, that at one time we squander or reject what at another time we carefully collect or amass.

“ In (6) he goes on to illustrate this matter in detail from “the passions and thoughts of men, their love and hatred, “their reposing and their rising; for all these take place at “fixed times, the diligent man cannot hasten them, and the indolent man cannot defer them.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Ver. 7. The word יִנְפַּךְ probably refers to the rending of the garments in times of mourning.

Ver. 9. “‘And all this being the case, what advantage has “the active man in the thing wherein he labours’, or, ‘in that “he labours? since his diligence is in vain.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The literal rendering of this verse would be, “Quid emolumendum est agentis in eo quod laboriose agit?”

וְעֵת לְהַשְׁלִיךְ : עֵת לְקָרּוּעַ וְעֵת לְתִפְזֵר עֵת לְחַשּׁוֹת 7
וְעֵת לְרַבֵּר : עֵת לְאֶהָבָן וְעֵת לְשָׁנָא עֵת מְלֻחָּמָה 8
וְעֵת נְשָׁלוּם : מִה-יִתְרֹן הַעוֹשָׂה בְּאַשְׁר הוּא עֲמָל : 9
רָאִיתִי אֶת-הָעָנוֹן אֲשֶׁר נָתַן אֱלֹהִים לְבָנֵי הָארָם 10
לְעָנוֹת בּוֹ : אֶת-הַבָּל עֲשָׂה יְפֵה בָּעֵתוֹ גַּם אֶת- 11

Ver. 10, 11. **מִשְׁרָת** **יְפֵה** has the accent **יְפֵה**, a conjunctive “ accent of the second class, so that it is to be connected with the “ following word **בָּעֵתוֹ**. The meaning is, that at a time fixed “ for a thing that thing will be good and excellent, and that all “ that God appoints is excellent in its season, even death and “ sickness, poverty and distress, famine and war, which are all evil “ in our eyes who are short-sighted and cannot possibly attain “ to the comprehension of the proportion of all things to their “ time and place; but if it were possible for man to comprehend “ all the works of God from the least to the greatest with all “ the proportions of time and place, he surely would know with “ certainty that nothing evil ever comes down from heaven, but “ that God has appointed every thing so as to be excellent in “ its own season.

גַּם נָתַן. “Behold, God hath implanted in the human heart “ the love of the world, i. e. of this present life, so that one “ should labour and another study philosophy, one should “ amass wealth and another build houses and another plant “ vineyards, one should love and another hate, &c.; and with “ all this labour and energy, this toil and diligence in the busi- “ ness of the world they are never exempt from the decrees “ of providence, and only do the will of God and his previous “ pleasure; and this is the case even though they think and “ imagine in their hearts that they are doing their own pleasure,

הָלֶם נָתַן בְּלִבְמִן מִבְּלֵי אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִמְצָא הָאָדָם
אֶת-הַמְּעַשָּׂה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הָאֱלֹהִים מִרְאֵשׁ וְעַד-סּוֹף :

"and not that of God. Behold! he says, in the end it is impossible but that they should find the employment of which God has decreed that it should be theirs from beginning to end. And the meaning of **מִבְּלֵי אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִמְצָא** is exactly the same as that of **שֶׁבְּדָא יִמְצָא**, 'that he must certainly find;' for if he had said, **מִבְּלֵי אֲשֶׁר יִמְצָא**, it would have been a negative proposition; and therefore, since he says, "**מִבְּלֵי אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִמְצָא**", it must be a positive proposition, as "though he had said, 'so that it is impossible that he should not find.'" Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The interpretation of this passage must depend entirely on the sense given to **אֶת-הָעוֹלָם**. The Rabbinic commentators coincide in rendering this "the world," i. e. the "love of the world," or "of this present life," such being the most common use of this word in the Talmud, and one which agrees very well with this particular verse as well as the general sense of the passage. Now it has been objected unfairly that the word **עוֹלָם** is not elsewhere used in Scripture except to express a long period of time definite or indefinite, and that therefore it cannot have a different sense here. This is true with regard to the use of the word **עוֹלָם**, but it is also true that this is the only passage in which we find this word in the singular number used absolutely, and with the definite article **הַ**. Every where else it is either in a state of construction with another noun, as **בְּרִית עוֹלָם**, "an everlasting covenant," or it is united with a preposition, as **לְעוֹלָם**; or it is used adverbially, as in the phrase, **עוֹלָם וְעַד**, as also sometimes without **וְעַד**, but I believe this is the only passage where **עוֹלָם** is used abso-

eximiam esse in suo quamque tempore; atque indidit etiam eorum animis hujus ævi amorem, quominus non opus illud sibi quisque inveniat quod

lutely and with τ , either in the subjective or objective case, throughout the Old Testament, so that there is no evidence that when so used, it ever bore the sense of eternal or even definite time, and its sense in the present instance must be inferred from the connexion of the passage and from analogy or authority, as is the case with all *ἀπάξ λεγομένα*, and not from use elsewhere. Now as to analogy, we find שָׁלֹשׁ in several passages always in the sense of "ages," "long periods of time," and that accordingly "*աւուր*" is always used in this sense in the New Testament. "*աւուր*" on the contrary is constantly used there for "the world," "this present life;" which must have arisen from the use of שָׁלֹשׁ in this sense among the later Jews, and is an additional evidence to that of the Talmud that it was so used; and surely with respect to a book of the date of Ecclesiastes the ascertaining of this use must be of great importance towards establishing the true sense of the word. As far as authority goes, I have all the Rabbins on my side in adopting the above sense. If it be objected that I do not render it "the world," but the "love of the world," this objection applies equally to the other interpretation of the passage, which is, "Et aeternitatis sensum, (not 'aeternitatem,') indidit eorum animis, non tamen ut perveniant illi ad universi operis divini a principio usque ad finem intelligentiam." It is perfectly true that "though we have some vague 'perception of eternity,' we cannot comprehend the whole of the Divine purposes in the government of the world," and that this remark harmonizes very well with the rest of the sense of the passage, which sets forth the propriety of cheerful and contented acquiesceal in the Divine appointments, over which man

• ei statuerit Deus ab initio usque ad finem. Com- 12
 peri igitur nihil esse iis bonum nisi lætari et bene
 agere in vitâ suâ, et præterea, quod aliquis come- 13
 dat bibatque videatque bonum fructum omnis
 laboris sui, id Dei munus esse. Comperi quicquid 14
 statuit Deus id fore semper fixum; neminem ei
 addere et neminem detrahere posse; et ita Deum

cannot possibly have any controul, but which He has appointed imminutably from all eternity, even to the minutest details of human life, in order that man might fear before Him, i. e. that they might trust in Him, and not in themselves; but a serious objection to this sense of the verse, however good and consistent with the passage, is the entire neglect on this interpretation of the important monosyllable **אֲלֹא**, which cannot be silenced as in Greek, by saying that two negatives do not make an affirmative, (vide Mendlessohn's comment.) Hurwitz indeed says, "Two negatives are not equivalent to an affirmative;" but this notion he has derived from the passages, Exod. xiv. 11, and 2 Kings i. 16, in both which the expression **הָמְבַל אֵין** is used to express, "are there (or, were there) none at all?" and is spoken with vehemence and indignation, which sufficiently accounts for the repetition of the negative, as we should have in Latin, "Nulline prorsus erant?" Buxtorf evidently regards the double negative in those two passages as an anomaly, and says, the **אֵין** is pleonastic. Mendlessohn's explanation avoids this error, and is perfectly consistent with the general sense. **בֶּל** and **בֶּלְיָה** are simple negatives like **אֲלֹא**, expressing both "non" and "ne." **עַד בְּלִי יְרַחַם** in Ps. lxxii. means "Till there be no moon," i. e. "as long as the moon lasts."

יְדֻעַתִּי כִּי אֵין טוֹב בָּם כִּי אֶסְ-לִשְׁמֹות וְלִעֲשֹׂות 12
 טוֹב בְּחַיָּנוּ : וְנִסְמַךְ כָּל-הָאָרֶץ שִׁיאָכֵל וְשַׁתָּה וְרָאָה 13
 טוֹב בְּכָל-עַמְּלָיו מַתָּחָאָלִים הִיא : יְדֻעַתִּי כִּי כָּל- 14
 אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה הָאֱלֹהִים הוּא יְהִי לְעוֹלָם עַלְיוֹ אֵין
 לְהֹסִיף וּמְמַנוֹ אֵין לְגַרוּעַ וְהָאֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה שִׁירָאָג

מְרָאָשׁ וְעַד סָוף is somewhat ambiguous. Agreeably with the accents it cannot mean, “which God has pre-ordained from the beginning to the end of time,” but either that “from the beginning of the world to the end of it man will always find exactly the employment appointed him by God,” or that “man performs from first to last, (that is, ‘throughout,’) precisely the employment which God has pre-ordained that he should, while he thinks he is following his own inclination.”

Ver. 12—14. “Since then this matter is true, and well established, behold I have now ascertained that both the remarks “which I have made above are true, and that they are not “contradictory one to another. I found that it is the happiness “of man to be cheerful, and to do good in his life-time; and “I also found that this happiness is not entirely committed to “the disposal of man, but that it is from the gift of God, since “I had seen that the small part which depends on the movements and actions of men is overruled by the divine decree; “for as to all that God appoints He has decreed with regard to “it that so it must be, so that none can add to it, and none “diminish from it. And if so, it is certain that cheerfulness “and happiness in employment is not committed to man’s disposal, but that this also comes from the hand of God, and He “has appointed and willed that no creature should be able to

15 מִלְפָנֵיו : מַה־שְׁחִיתָ בְּבָרֶה הוּא וְאֲשֶׁר לְהִזְמֹת בְּבָרֶה

"add to His appointment or diminish from it, in order that "none might trust in their own doings, but fear before Him." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. Ver. 12. Here we have again the phrase, טוב ב, in the sense of "good for." Aben Ezra renders טוב לעשיות, "jucunde vivere," "animæ suæ bonum ostendere," "indulgere genio," but it properly means, as in the rest of Scripture, (vide Psalm xxxiv. 15, xxxvii. 27) "to do right," "to depart from evil." So also in (13), רָאָה טוב means, "sees good done or effected," i. e. to himself and others by means of his labour.

The י before שתחה, and also before ראה, are of course conversive after the future יאכל.

In (14) refers not to created things, as Maimonides takes it in his Moreh Nevochim, which do not continue immutable, but to the appointments of God in human affairs. השעה has the same sense here as in verse 11, "The work which God has appointed for him." לען is to be construed with קיימן in the sense, "to add to it."

Ver. 15. "The past event has already happened, and "there is no changing it, and so the future event is fixed by "God, as though it had already happened; for he has already "decreed respecting it that it is to happen; and the condition "of the past and future is not really different as being such; "for the one is past and has already been, and the other is "future and will have been; and when its time and season "come, the future will become past; for God has willed that "things should come and roll on one after another, as if the "future constantly pursued or followed the past; and this is "what is meant by God's 'requiring the past to be pursued "by the future,' יבקש את־ינדרך, that agreeably to the pre-

15 statuere ut ab hominibus ipse *situs* metuatur. Quod fuit jamdudum fuit, et quodcunque erit est quasi

"ordained decree one event comes after another, and so they "cleave in closely connected sequence one to the other, like the "links of a chain, and roll one after the other in continual "pursuit." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. בְּקַשׁ אֶת־נָרְךָ. Mendlessohn explains this as merely signifying that God requires that sequence of events which takes place in the world, the past to be followed by the future, and that the future is just as much within His grasp as the past, and that all events, past, present, and to come, are viewed and overruled by him simultaneously, and required to make their appearance in the order which he has fixed. Rosenmuller, agreeably with the rendering of the Vulgate, "Deus instaurat quod abiit," would apparently render it, "God requires the recurrence of what is past," so that there is nothing new in the world; he says, "Deus propulsa querit, reparat." He cites, very much to his purpose, Job iii. 4, where speaking of his birth-day Job says, אֵל זִדְרְשָׁהוּ אֶלְעָה מִפְּעָל, "Ne requirat eam Deus superne," which he explains soon after by saying, אֵל תַּחֲדֵב יְמִינְךָ שָׁגָן בְּמִסְפֵּר יְרֻחָם אֶל־יְבוֹא, "Let it not rejoice among the days of the year; into the number of the months let it not come;" so that קְרָשׁ is there equivalent to בְּקַשׁ in the above phrase, and Job means that he hopes the recurrence of that day may not be required by God, but that it may be expunged from the series of the days of the year, so that no other day may be annually placed in its room to correspond to it. Though it seems strange at first sight to make this passage mean, "that God requires the actual recurrence of past events," it must be recollected that Solomon has already said that whatever seems to us to be new has

jamdudum fuerit, et repetit Deus quod fugatum (*vel* “præteritum”) est. Vidi autem præterea sub 16 sole locum judicii ibi esse improbitatem, et locum justitiae ibi esse injustitiam. Itaque dixi mecum, 17 “Justum et injustum judicabit Deus, tempus enim est illic constitutum omni negotio omnique operi.”

really taken place before, and that whatever has happened will happen again, which seems to imply the same thing, and the passage may therefore be rendered indifferently, “God requires the past to be pursued or followed by the future,” or, “God requires the recurrence of the past.” The Targum takes נָרְקָפָה to mean, “the persecuted man,” “God avenges the persecuted,” and “requires him at the hand of his oppressor;” this sense agrees very well with the following passage, but not at all with the former part of the same verse. Beside the reading in this case would probably have been, אֲתָּה נָרְקָפָה, not נָרְקָפָה.

Ver. 16. “He now begins to speak of the existence of “the soul of man after the death of the body, and of reward “and punishment in a future state. He says, ‘I saw under “the sun, and behold! the world was full of oppression and “violence; the unjust man sought to swallow up him who was “more righteous than himself, and the place from which we “expect justice, that very place was the place of violence, and so “also of the place of righteousness.’ Now the recompensing evil “to the doers of evil is called justice, (מִשְׁפָט,) and the recom-“pensing good to the doers of good is called righteousness, “(מִצְדָּקָה,) and injustice, עַשְׂרָבָה, is the opposite of both these, and “accordingly we find it opposed to them both in the text.

“עַשְׂרָבָה. This is put for the abstract noun עַשְׂרָבָה on account “of the pause; the noun of quality or adjective עַשְׂרָבָה, is al-

הִיא וְהַאֲלֹהִים יַבְקֵש אֶת־גָּדוֹף : וְעַזְרָה רָאִיתִי תְּחִתָּה 16
 הַשְׁמָשׁ מָקוֹם הַמִּשְׁפֶּט שְׁפָה הַרְשָׁע וָמָקוֹם הַצְּדָקָה
 שְׁפָה הַרְשָׁע : אָמְרָתִי אָנִי בַּלְבִּי אֶת־הַצְּדִיק וְאֶת־17
 הַרְשָׁע יִשְׁפְּט הַאֲלֹהִים בִּיעַת לְכָל־חַפֵּץ וְעַל כָּל—

“ways written with a kametz (†) under the last syllable, and
 “would not have it altered to a pathack (-) at the pause.”
 Mendlessohn.

Ver. 17. “ Since I could not but wonder to see that the
 “ perfidious man practised perfidy, and the plunderer plundered,
 “ and their way still prospered, and good men continued in
 “ poverty, and all their days were spent in trouble, though
 “ it is true that all the ways of God are judgment, for ‘just
 “ and right is he,’ I inferred that the truth must be, that
 “ God will judge the righteous and the wicked at some
 “ future time, and although this be delayed, it will at last
 “ take place in its proper hour, for there is a doom for every
 “ action, and for every work there is a trial and account in the
 “ world to come. And indeed the truth is that the prosperity
 “ of the wicked and the chastisement of the just in this life
 “ is a sufficient proof of the existence of the soul after death ;
 “ for no person however perverse can deny that the judge of
 “ all the earth is ‘a God of truth, and without iniquity ;’ and
 “ unless God did justice and justified the righteous and con-
 “ demned the wicked, he could not escape the imputation of evil
 “ and violence, (heaven pardon the thought !). Consequently
 “ every one who believes in the divine attributes, that He is
 “ righteous and loving righteousness and justice, cannot escape
 “ from one of these two alternatives ; either he must believe
 “ in the immortality of the soul and reward and punishment

18 הַמְעָשָׂה שֵׁם : אָמַרְתִּי אֲנָנוּ בְּלֹבֶן עַל־דְּבָרָת בְּנֵי
הָאָדָם לְבָרֵם הָאֱלֹהִים וְלֹרְאוֹת שְׁחַם־בְּהָמָה הַמְּהָ

"in the life to come; or he must deny what he sees with his own eyes, and say that there is not found a righteous man perishing in his righteousness, or a wicked man prospering in his wickedness; and here the wise man expresses himself briefly; but in the 11th Section he afterwards enlarges on this topic, adducing strong proofs such as must be perfectly satisfactory to any intelligent person." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. **עת** means here "a time of account," just as in viii. 6, where it is used as synonymous with **משפט**. It may be rendered "doom."

Ver. 18. "I said again to myself, It is clear that this is an argument to which there is no answer. Now part of the sons of men say that examination into the nature of the soul will suffice to make us believe in its immortality, for that God has chosen and preferred man above all creatures, (and this is the meaning of 'with respect to their saying 'לְבָרֵם הָאֱלֹהִים' i. e. that God has chosen them, and has preferred them above all the creatures of the world, to grant them knowledge and understanding and intelligence.) But I see that the truth is not so, but בְּהָמָה הַמְּה לְהָם, i. e. that the sons of men when deserted by the providence of God and left to themselves, are not in themselves at all superior to beasts; and to express this he doubles the word **הָם**, and says, **הַמְּה לְהָם**, as we should say, 'that when left to themselves, **הַמְּה—לְהָם** (they are like the beasts of the earth.' " Mendelssohn.

18 Quod ad dictum attinet hominum, “Deum ipsos *reliquis animalibus præferre*,” mecum ratiocinatus sum cernere eos debere per seipsos se meros bestias

NOTE. The rabbinic commentators make the following remarks on this passage.

דָבַר means the same as **דָבָר**, that is, “what is said.”

בָּרַם is a verb in the past tense, and **לִבְרַם** is equivalent in sense to **בָּרַם הָאֱלֹהִים**, “that God has chosen them.” Though it is not usual that the servile letters “**בְּכָל**” should be joined as prefixes to verbs in the past tense, still we find sometimes that such verbs have a servile **ה** prefixed to them when it can be only interpreted to mean **אֲשֶׁר**, “that;” thus in 2 Chron. xxix. 36, **עַל הַחֲכִין הָאֱלֹהִים לְעַם**, “on the account,” or, “because that God prepared the people.” (This may mean “established, confirmed the heart of the people,” **לִבְ** being understood after **הַחֲכִין**.) 1 Chron. xxix. 17, **הַגִּמְצָאוּ**, “That were found,” that is, “the people that were found.” 1 Chron. xxvi. 28, **כָּל הַתְּקִיעֵשׁ שָׁם**, “All that Samuel consecrated;” and we also find a servile **בְּ** in this sense, as **בָּהֲכִין לוֹ דָוִד**, “That he established David for himself.” In this sense in all probability **לִ** is used in this passage. And **בָּרַם** is the past tense **בָּרָה** with the affix of the objective third person plural, which causes the **ה** to disappear. This verb **בָּרָה** bears here the same sense as it does in the passage **בָּרֵךְ בְּךָם אִישׁ**, “Choose you a man.” If we take it to be the infinitive mood and the root **בָּרַר**, there is a difficulty about the vowels. It would have been then regular for the **בְּ** to have under it a kametz chatuph (ׂ), and the **רְ** to be dageshed, after the form **לְהַקְרִיב**, Deut. ii. 15, (ad quassandum eos,) from **הַמְּ**, (for

esse; namque homines casibus obnoxios esse, et 19
bestias casibus obnoxios, et unum eundemque casum

the kametz chatuph (ׁ) and the kibbutz (ׂ) are allied by the nature of pronunciation, and consequently the form of the word is not altered by the appearance of the one in the place of the other). But because a ר refuses to admit a dagesh, kametz gadol (ׁ) will have been put under the ב, instead of (ׂ) on this hypothesis, whereas kametz chatuph ought to have been changed into a cholem (ׄ) in this case, as being the parent long-vowel of kibbutz and kametz chatuph, and the word should have been לְבָרֶם, as in the words בָּרוּתָה, מֶלֶךְ, שָׁרֵף, which all occur in Scripture, and are Puhal forms where the (ׂ) has been changed into (ׄ), because the ר will not admit a dagesh. We must therefore take it from בָּרָה.

It must be observed with regard to these remarks, that the rabbinic commentator, choosing to take the text as it stands in the Masoretic copies, without admitting suggestions from any others, seems to have assumed that the word בָּרֶם is not a contracted form. This being assumed, its form cannot as he says be any other but that of the third person singular præterite of the verb בָּרָה, with the objective pronominal affix בָּ of the third person plural; for the verb בָּרַר under the same circumstances would give us the form לְבָרֶם, and not לְבָרִים; and it has been satisfactorily shewn that it cannot be infinitive Kal of בָּרַר, for then it would have been לְבָרָם after the form לְהַקְמָה in Deuteronomy. Observe that the verb בָּרָה means only "to choose," and "to eat."

Yarchi, on the other hand, says that some copies read בָּרִים, (which would be the infinitive Pihel of בָּרָה with the affix; for we find this infinitive לְבָרַר in Daniel iii. 11) and that לְבָרֶם must be a contraction for it, and renders it לְהַזְוִיעָם.

לְהָם : בַּיּוֹם בְּנֵי-הָאָדָם וּמִקְרָה הַבְּהָמָה וּמִקְרָה 19

i. e. “Ut notum iis faciat.” He takes the Chaldee sense of the word בָּרֶר, viz. “purgare,” “mundare,” and hence, “dilucidare,” “declarare.” The whole sense of the passage would thus be, “Cogitavi tecum de ratione et conditione filiorum hominis eam talem esse ut declararet iis Deus et ut videant quod ipsi per scipios bestiae sint.” “I said to myself with respect to the sons of men, *that their condition is such* that God shews them clearly and that they can see that in themselves they are but beasts.” Supposing the above contraction, and that בְּרִית עַל means, “with respect to,” “with respect to the condition of,” this rendering is quite compatible with the Hebrew; but it is unworthy of the inspired writer, and not to be put in comparison with the ingenious version of Mendelssohn. According to him, the conjunction ו before לְרֹאֹת is merely conducive to the sense, and may be expressed in English by, “I say,” as in Exod. xii. 15 and 19, וְכֹרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַחַיָּה, “That soul, I say, shall be cut off.” Vid. Eccles. iv. 10, 11, וְחַם לְהָם שְׁנֵי לְהַקִּימָו, and numberless other instances. Its use is to recall the attention after a parenthesis or after a description of the subject of the sentence; and I render ver. 18, “I thought with myself with respect to the saying of the sons of men that God has preferred them by his especial choice, I thought, I say, that they ought to see that by themselves they are but beasts,” לְרֹאֹת being here an infinitive, expressing duty and obligation. So we frequently find the infinitive used for an imperative, chap. v. 1, וְקַרְזֵב לְשִׁמְעָע, “And draw near to hear,” and Exod. xxii. 8, וְכֹרֵד, “memento,” and Deut. v. 12, שְׁמֹר, “custodi,” at the beginnings of sentences.

Ver. 19, 20. “And if we were to form our judgment of

אָחֵר לְהַסְבִּיר בְּמֹות זֶה כִּי מֹות זֶה וְרוּת אָחֵר לְפָל
 20 וּמוֹתָר הָאָדָם מִן-הַבְּהִמָּה אַזְנוֹ בֵּין הַפָּל הַכְּלָל : הַפָּל
 הַוְּלֵךְ אֶל-מָקוֹם אָחֵר הַפָּל תִּהְיָה מִן-הַעֲפָר וְהַפָּל
 21 שָׁב אֶל-הַעֲפָר : מֵי יָרֻעַ רִיחַ בְּנֵי הָאָדָם הַעֲלָה
 הִיא לִמְעָלָה וְרוּת הַבְּהִמָּה תִּרְדַּת הִיא לִמְטָה לְאָרֶץ :

"man and his condition from what we see in this world only,
 "behold the sons of men would be mere creatures of accident in
 "this world, without any enduring substance" (*מִקְרָה* and *עַצְמוֹת*)
 are opposed as 'accident and substance' by the schoolmen,)
 "and the beast is also the creature of accident, and the same
 "accidents belong to both of them in all the changes which
 "pass over them. *מִקְרָה* is written three times in this verse
 "with a segol (ז), and this shews that each time it is in the
 "absolute form, for if it had been in a state of construction,
 "it would have taken a tzere (צ) instead." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The meaning of the first part of verse 19, is,
 "For the sons of men are mere chance, just as the beasts are
 mere chance," ; being a conjugation of comparison, as it is in
 Job v. 7, and in Prov. xxv. 25, "Aqua frigida animæ lassæ, et
 (i. e. est sicut) nuncius bonus e terra longinqua." Observe that
מוֹת is the state of construction of *מוֹת*, "death," the verb to
 die being *מוֹת*.

Ver. 21. "Some of the interpreters have thought that
 "the meaning of this verse is, 'Who knows if the spirit of
 "the sons of men goes up, &c.' but this interpretation is con-
 "trary to the accents, because the word *הָאָדָם* has (:) *קָרְבָּן*,
 "a distinctive accent of the second class, and the word *עַד*

utrisque posse contingere, sicut horum mortem
sic illorum mortem, et eundem utrisque spiritum
vitaे esse, et nullam esse homini bestiæ præstan-
20 tiā, sed utrumque merum halitum esse, utrum-
que ad eundem locum ire, utrumque ex pulvere
21 ortum esse, et utrumque ad pulverem redire; so-
lum scientem scire de spiritu hominum quod sursum
ascendat, et de spiritu bestiarum quod deorsum ad

“ has the accent פָּקִידֹו, or רַבְעֵי as it is otherwise called; where-
“ as according to this rendering the words רִיחַ בְּנֵי הָאָדָם would
“ have been less separated by accent from the next words;
“ and the word עֲזִיזִים ought to have had the accent (:) נְקֻפָּה, as
“ any one skilled in the accents will be aware. And agreeably
“ to the accents it is explained thus; ‘ He only who is intelligent
“ can understand and comprehend the nature of the spirit of the
“ sons of men, whether it ascends upwards, and the nature of
“ the spirit of the beast, whether it goes down to the earth;’
“ for the investigation into the nature of the soul is subtle and
“ exceedingly deep, and it is difficult to bring from it proof that
“ man is distinguished above the rest of creatures, as the sons
“ of men say they are; and as to the body they are alike in all
“ the accidents which befall them.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. According to Mendlessohn's ingenious rendering, עֲזִיזִים must be supplied after עֲזִיזִים from the latter word. Vid. Joel ii. 14, where עֲזִיזִים is used in exactly the same sense; “ He who is intelligent, (who is wise in divine and spiritual things,) will return and repent, and leave behind him with the priest an offering to the Lord.” And Jonah iii. 9, “ He who hath understanding will turn back (from his evil way), and God will repent and turn away from his fierce anger, &c.”

terram descendat: comperique nil melius esse *quod* 22
ad istud dictum quam quod lætitiam quisque ex opere
suo perciperet, quippe quæ *solus* ejus esset fructus; C^{AP.}
quis enim eum duceret ut illud videret quod post IV.
eum futurum esset? Itaque revertetur ad contem- 1
plandas cunctas oppressiones quæ fiunt sub sole, et
ecce! lachrymæ oppressorum, nec quisquam iis consolator! et ex parte oppressorum potestas erat, et

Observe that this verse and the two preceding are all in the “obliqua oratio,” being all a portion of Solomon’s reflections on the “saying of the sons of men” mentioned above. The same is the case with verse 22, from “nil melius esse.” He says that he perceived that on the ground of that “saying” alone the best thing man could do would be to enjoy himself in this life, as it would be impossible for him to discover anything of the life beyond or about a future judgment.

Ver. 22. “‘ And consequently but for the strong proof
“mentioned above of the immortality of the soul and rewards
“and punishments in a future state I should have concluded
“that there was nothing better for man than his enjoying him-
“self in his employment while he is yet alive, for that this is
“clearly his portion; since who should bring him to see into
“what shall be hereafter?’ Is not the understanding the nature
“of the soul a deep matter, and one that requires arguments
“which none but the ablest investigators can comprehend? and
“with respect to the body men and beasts are liable to the
“same accidents; and how then can they derive consolation
“from that view of the subject? whereas the above is a satis-
“factory proof of the immortality of the soul and reward and
“punishment in the life to come, as I have explained.” Men-
dlessohn.

וְרָאִיתִי בַּי אֵין טוֹב מְאֹשֶׁר יִשְׂמַח הָאָדָם בַּמְעֻשָׂיו 22
 בַּי-הַיָּא חֲלָקָו בַּי מַי יִבְיאָנו לְרֹאֹת בְּמָה שִׁירְיָה
 אַחֲרָיו : וְשִׁבְתִּי אָנִי וְאֶרְאֶה אַת-פָּל-הַעֲשָׂקִים אֲשֶׁר
 גְּעָשִׂים תְּחַת הַשְּׁמֶשׁ וְהַגָּה , רַמְעַת הַעֲשָׂקִים וְאֵין
 לְהָם מִנְחָם וּמִיד עַשְׂקִים בָּם וְאֵין לְהָם מִנְחָם :

NOTE. He therefore returns to the consideration of the unequal administration of justice in the world, as a more conclusive argument than the above for the existence of a life to come.

Ver. 1. "He says, 'I perceived that the investigation of "the nature of the soul does not bring men out of doubt; so "I returned to contemplate all the oppressions done under the "sun, and how that under the government of a God of truth "who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity the oppressed "were mourning and crying in the bitterness of their soul, "while they had no comforter; and that the oppressors were "compelling them by the power and authority in their hands "to all that they pleased, and that they were bending under "their hands without any comforter, and much less a deliverer "and sustainer; and hence I inferred that the truth must un- "doubtedly be what I have said, that there is a time for every "business and every work there, and that God will bring the "oppressor and the oppressed to judgment, and render to them "according to their deserts.'" Mendelssohn.

NOTE. שִׁבְתִּי וְאֶרְאֶה, literally, "I returned and contemplated," i. e. "I contemplated again," or, "I returned to the contemplation."

2 וַיֹּשֶׁבֶת אָנִי אֶת-הַמְּתִים שִׁבְעָר מֵתוֹ מִן-קָהִלִּים אֲשֶׁר
 3 הַמָּה חַיִם עָרָנָה : וְטוֹב מְשִׁנִּים אֲת אֲשֶׁר-עָזָן
 לֹא חַיָּה אֲשֶׁר לְאֶרְאָה אֶת-קָמָעָשָׂה הָרָע אֲשֶׁר גָּעָשָׂה
 תְּחִתְּ הַשְּׁמֶשׁ :

וַיֹּמֶר, &c. Some render this, supplying before בְּנֵי, “And there was no strength (to deliver) from what follows, “from the hand of their oppressors, and no comforter.” I have preferred to render מִן־, “ex parte,” “on the side of.” וְ in the last clause may perhaps mean, “so that;” otherwise there seems to be a needless repetition of the same sentence, viz. אֵין לְהָם מְנִיחָם; and the fact of their having no comforter is explained by mention of the overwhelming power of their oppressors, which deterred all from daring to offer consolation. We find the word עַשְׁקָוּם evidently used in the sense of “oppressions” in Amos iii. 9. So Gesenius renders it in that passage, and in this. In the second case קָמָעָת עַשְׁקָוּם, it must mean, “the oppressed,” and it would therefore be more consistent to render it the same in the first case also, but then the word גָּעָשָׂם would be unsuitable.

Ver. 2, 3. “‘For if it were not so, I should have been “praising the dead who are already dead above the living “who are still alive;’ (שִׁבְעָר is the infinitive Pihel instead of a “participle;) (3) ‘and I should have been praising as better off “than either of them him who has not yet been born and has not “seen the evil deeds done under the sun; and it is certain that “God (heaven pardon the thought!) has not created man upon “the earth for his evil, and to be always taking vengeance on “him, but in his great mercy, to pour out of His goodness upon “him; and where is this goodness if man only live a few days, “so as to see the tears of the oppressed, or to be himself op-

2 nemo iis aderat consolator! adeo ut *primo visu*
 feliciores prædicarem mortuos, quod jampridem
 obiissent, quam vivos quod superstites adhuc es-
 3 sent; et beatiorem utrisque qui adhuc non extiterat
 quod non vidisset mala facinora quæ sub sole fiunt.

“pressed and crushed, and after that should die like the death
 “of the beast, and perish by an irreparable destruction? Such
 “are not the ways of God. The truth of the matter must be, as
 “I have said, that God will judge the righteous and the wicked.
 “Here ends the discussion on the immortality of the soul.

“**עד הנה** is a contraction for **עד עתה**, ‘as far as here;’ and
 “so **עד תן** is for **עד תן**, where the final **ה** is wanting.” Men-
 dlessohn.

NOTE. Ver. 2. **וְשִׁבְתִּי אַנְּיָנִי** may be rendered, “So that I
 was ready to praise,” i. e. the view of the oppressions mentioned
 above, without taking into consideration a future account, made
 it appear preferable to this life never to have existed at all,
 so that the reality of a future judgment was necessary for the
 demonstration of the benevolence of the deity. The expression
שִׁבְבָּר מֶתֶךְ would seem superfluous after **הַמִּתְּהִימָּנִים**, if we render
שְׁ “who.” It would be better therefore to render it, “in that,”
 as well as **אֲשֶׁר** in what follows.

Ver. 3. **טוֹב מִ** means here, as it does in several passages
 of this book, not “better than,” but “better off than,” “having
 a better lot than.” In this passage, as well as in the corre-
 sponding one in Section xi, Solomon concludes his reasoning not
 with an explicit declaration of the existence of a future state,
 but with a lively description of the hopeless misery of our con-
 dition here without it, whereby he implies its certainty, because
 God must have formed his creatures for their good, and not for
 His vengeance.

SECTIO SEPTIMA.

Porro animadverti omnem laboriosam industriam 4
et omnem operis successum, quod in invidiâ constant
quâ quisque a vicino suo afficitur, adeo ut hæc
quoque ceu halitus essent aut ventosa imaginatio.
Ignavus complicat manus suas, et quasi suam ipsius 5
carnem comedit. Melior est pugillus quietis, quam 6

Ver. 4. "He says with respect to political prosperity,
"that according to the opinion of some statesmen, the state
"will be prosperous and happy if the men are laborious and
"diligent in all sorts of business, and if their employment
"consist in successful manufacture, i. e. such as is in the highest
"degree good and excellent and acceptable to merchants, and
"this is the opinion of most kings and princes in our times;
"and it appears from Scripture that king Solomon too had
"been inclined to entertain it; but now he saw that this too
"was in vain; for that this sort of prosperity is founded on
"the jealousy of each against his neighbour; that one wishes
"to excel his fellow in his house, his clothes, his furniture, his
"ornaments, his valuables, and all things which he takes pride
"in; and hence if you incite the men of a state to labour and
"successful manufacture, you will be kindling in spite of yourself
"the flame of jealousy and self-exaltation in their hearts; and
"your reward will thus turn to your injury; for it is better for
"them to be contented, and not seek superfluity; and then they
"will not lift up themselves in pride each against his neighbour,
"but they will reject all 'pleasant pictures,' and thus there

THE SEVENTH SECTION.

וְרָאִיתִי אֲנִי אֶת־בֵּל־עַמֶּל וְאֶת בֵּל־בָּשָׂרֹן הַמְּעוֹשָׁה 4
 בְּיַד קָנָאת־אִישׁ מְרֻעָהוּ גַּם־זֶה הַבֵּל וְרַעֲוָת רָות :
 הַפְּסִיל חַבֵּק אֶת־יָדָיו וְאֶכְלָל אֶת־בָּשָׂרוֹ : טֹוב מְלָא 5, 6

"will be no occasion for this successful manufacture." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. קָנָאת־אִישׁ מְרֻעָהוּ means "The jealousy of a man arising from his neighbour," i. e. "with which he is affected by seeing his neighbour's prosperity," or, as we say, "a man's jealousy of his neighbour." From this unavoidable connexion of industry with jealousy he infers that industry too is included under the general denomination of vanity.

Ver. 5. "The diligent man blames the indolent man, saying, 'The fool who folds his hands and eats up all he has without labouring to increase his stock, is as though he devoured his own flesh.' " Mendlessohn.

NOTE. I prefer to understand this verse as describing the opposite extreme to that depicted in the preceding; that whereas one man is driven on by jealousy to laborious industry, another lives on his patrimony in indolence, and exhausts it without making any steps to repair the inroads he makes upon it; for this is the meaning of "devouring his own flesh." There is still another interpretation which connects this verse with the preceding, without making any opposition between them, viz.

ז בָּקַע נְחַת מְפֻלָּא חִפּוּנִים עַמְל וְרֹעֲוֹת רֹוח : וְשַׁבְתִּי
 8 אֲנִי וְאֶרְאֶה הַבֵּל תְּחַת הַשְּׁמֶש : יִש אָחָד וְאֵין שְׁנִי
 גַּם בֵּן וְאֶח אַיְזָלו וְאֵין קָז לְכָל-עַמְלׂו גַּס-עִינָיו^ו
 לֹא-תְשַׁבַּע עַשֵּר וְלִמְיָה אֲנִי עַמְל וּמְחַסֵּר אֶת-נְפָשָׁי
 9 מְטוֹבָה גַּס-יְה הַבֵּל וְעַנְיָן רַע הוּא : טוֹבִים הַשְׁנִים

“The fool wrings his hands, and gnaws his flesh with envy;” but the rendering I have adopted is supported by Prov. vi. 10, where the sluggard says, *מעט חבק ידים לשׁבָב*, and expresses indolence, and not vexation.

Ver. 6. “And the indolent man answers, ‘Better for me is it that I should be content with a little, with a handful in peace and quiet, than have both hands full of labour and trouble, like the employment of the diligent man, who labours all day with a mere windy notion, that is to say, devises empty schemes as to what he shall do on the morrow, whereby and how he shall get wages and the like.’ *מלָא* is ‘a noun substantive; the hollow of the hand is called בָּקָע, because it is בְּפַזְפַּת, ‘bent’.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. I still venture to differ from Mendlessohn, and take this verse as teaching a middle course between his who squanders till he is reduced to beggary, and his who is always labouring with toilsome industry to surpass his neighbour in wealth. “Better is a quiet handful, i. e. the earnings of one who is diligent without anxiety, than the enjoyment of the fruits of an ill-directed industry.” Observe that the words *ורֹעֲוֹת רֹוח* are repeated to mark the reference to the labour

plena utraque vola laboris meræque ventosæ imaginationis. Evidem redii ad contemplationem vanitatis sub sole. Est qui solus vivit, cui non est aliquis secundus, cui neque filius est neque frater, et eujus tamen laborum nullus est finis neque oculus divitiis satiatur; et quempropter ego *si talis essem* laborarem et genium meum voluptate defraudarem? sed ista quoque vana est et mala occupatio, (*sive* mali occupatio). Præstant duo uni, quia est illis merces

of the jealous man spoken of above. The word מַלְאָה denotes that with which anything is full, as in the phrase אָרֶץ וּמַלְאָה, “The earth and all that fills it.” מַלְאָה בַּפַּת is “what can be held in the hollow of one hand;” מַלְאָה חֲפִנִים is “what can be held within the two hands held together.”

Ver. 7, 8. “He now speaks about the love of company, “and shews that it is good for a man to seek a help-mate. “He says, ‘There is the case of a single man, who has no “second person connected with him, that is, who has no wife “or children.’” Mendlessohn.

The קְרֵי on the word עִירָיו is עַמְּךָ.

NOTE. In verse 8, he supposes himself in the place of the miser, and says, “If I had no connexions, for whom should I be toiling? and since I should have none to provide for, why should I be avaricious and self-denying to no purpose?” Some read עַמְּךָ instead of עִירָיו; the sense would then be “the occupation of a bad man.” The same diversity of reading occurs in verse 13, where the former is the preferable one, and that adopted by Mendlessohn. Here perhaps the latter gives the best sense.

Ver. 9. “In the king’s desire to increase industry and

bona laboris sui. Nam si lapsi fuerint alter eriget 10
alterum; vae autem soli isti si lapsus erit, quum
nullus alter est qui eum erigat! Quinetiam si una 11
cubant duo, calebunt; uni vero soli quomodo erit

"diligence in his dominions he here advises the people of his
"country that men and women should marry in order that
"they may have good reward for their labour; for 'the happiness
"of a family is in the number of it.'" Mendlessohn.

NOTE. "They have a good reward for their labour," because they can often effect things in concert which singly they could not perform, and because they enjoy their earnings better together than they could alone.

Ver. 10. "For even if both of them are laid together on
"the bed of sickness, nevertheless each of them will be able to
"cherish and support the other on the couch of languishing
"with much prayer and watchful attention, till they rise from
"it and the sick person says, 'I am strong;' but woe to the
"single man! &c." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Mendlessohn takes נִפְלֵל here as referring to illness; but it may also refer to any loss or disaster, which a married couple can better bear up under than a single individual. The literal rendering of the first clause is, "Nam si lapsi fuerint unus eriget socium suum." I have rendered the latter clause agreeably to the accents; the pause of the zakeph on נִפְלֵל is neglected if we render it as some have done, "because he may fall, and there be none to help him to rise."

Ver. 11. "When a man and woman warm and comfort
"one another, there is no need for them to procure themselves
"clothes to cover them on their bed to warm themselves in;
"but for the single man, how shall he be warm on his bed at
"night by covering himself only with the clothes which he has

מִן־הַאֲחֶר אָשֵׁר יִשְׁלַּחַם שָׁכֶר טוֹב בְּעַמְּלָס : ק' 10
 אָב־יִפְלֵל הַאֲחֶר יִקְיִם אֶת־חֶבְרוֹ וְאַיְלוֹ הַאֲחֶר שִׁיפֵּל
 וְאַיְן שְׁנֵי לְהַקְיָמוֹ : גַּם אָסִיְשָׁבְבוּ שְׁנִים וְתִּסְ 11

"to wear? He must necessarily procure blankets and coverlets "to keep himself warm in; and if so, he will not have good "recompense for his labour." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. חַמֵּם and חַמָּה are both impersonal forms from חַמֵּן. The first is the præterite Kal, the second the future Niphal. חַמָּה is rendered literally, "It will be warm to them;" the נ being merely conductive to the sense, and at the same time conversive, because the preceding verb is in the future tense. It may be here observed that the נ is not conversive when pre-fixed to a præterite, unless there be a preceding verb in the future tense or in the imperative mood immediately before it in the sentence. The intervention of a clause containing several participles, all of which follow the tense of the preceding future verb, as in 2 Kings v. 18, does not deprive the נ of its conversive power.

Mendlessohn seems to have adopted an interpretation of the phrase, "They have good reward for their labour," which is somewhat frivolous and far-fetched; he implies that a married couple will make their wages go farther than a single man, because they will not have to go to so much expense in blankets, their contact keeping them warm. So we find him in another passage explaining a miser's being said "to eat in the dark," by the remark, that such an one will not choose to pay for candle-light, whereas in all probability the expression only refers to the gloominess of a miser's disposition. Such notions of parsimony could hardly have suggested themselves to the royal and magnificent Solomon.

12 לְהָם וַיֹּאֶחֶד אִיד יְחָם : וְאַס-יִתְקַפֵּוּ הַאֲחֶר הַשְׁנִים
 יַעֲמְדוּ נְגַדּוּ וְרַחֲיוֹתָם הַמְּשֻׁלָּשׁ לֹא בִּמְהֻרָה יַעֲתִקּוּ :
 13 טֹב יִלְד מִסְפֵּן וְחַבֵּס מֶפְלָךְ זָקָן וּבְכַל אָשָׁר לְאִירָעָ
 14 לְהַזָּהָר עֹזֶר : כִּי-מִבֵּית הַסּוּרִים יָצָא לְמַלְךָ בְּ גַם

Ver. 12. “*תקַפֵּוּ* is a transitive verb. We find it also in “Job xiv. 20, ‘תַּתְקַפֵּהוּ לְנֶצֶח’, ‘Thou wilt oppress him for ever.’ In verse 12, we have the other pronominal affix masculine joined with this verb, viz. *וְ* instead of *לְ*. The rendering agreeably with the accents is, ‘If an individual (*הַאֲחֶר*) shall oppress him, i. e. either of the two who are united by friendship, the two will both of them withstand him, i. e. that individual.’ (‘Resistent’ is equivalent to ‘resistere valebunt.’)

“What is meant by the triple cord not being quickly broken is, that if they give birth to a son, he will be able to stand up with them against their adversaries; and so says the Psalmist, (who in this case is Solomon), ‘Like as the arrows in the hands of the giant, so are the young children. Happy is the man who hath his quiver full of them, he shall not be ashamed when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.’” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The oppressor here must necessarily be a single individual, as, if there be more than one oppressor, the advantage that two will have against them is not obviously necessary.

Ver. 13, 14. “He here is directing his attention to government and regal authority, and the glory of a king in his servants and his people, and his prosperity on his throne; and he says, ‘A man who has lived but few years, who is poor

12 calor? Quod si opprimuerit alterutrum unus quidam, duo ei resistent; et filum triplex non cito
13 rumpetur. "Præstat juvenis pauper et prudens regi
14 seni et stolido qui nescit amplius admoneri; etiam-
si e carcere vincitorum ad regnandum prodeat; nam
qui in imperio suo nascitur nascitur hic quoque

" but intelligent, is better off than an old and foolish king, who
" will not hearken to the voice of those who would put him on
" his guard, since he who is old in folly makes stiff his neck
" and hardens his heart to such a degree that he will not be-
" lieve his servants when they tell him the truth. Even if this
" indigent man comes out of a house of bondsmen the case is
" still the same; for even the old king was poor at the day of
" his birth." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. I venture in this place to differ from Mendlessohn's method of explaining the arrangement and distribution of these and the following verses. I conceive verses 13 and 14 to be the murmurings of the discontented people of Israel desirous to raise Jeroboam to the throne, who was the son of a slave of Solomon's, as we find from Kings xi. 26. They said, "A poor and indigent but wise youth is better than an old and foolish king, who is too old to be advised, (literally, 'who knows no longer to be advised,') even if he come out of a house of bondsmen to rule, for even he who is born to royalty has nothing when he comes into the world." Solomon then answers their objections by saying, that when Jeroboam is made king they will soon want another, and thus points out the worthlessness of popularity. בַּי, "even though," thus in Psal. xxv. 11, "Pardon my iniquity," בַּי רְבָב דְּאָא, "even though it be great;" Psal. xli. 5, "Heal my soul," לְכַד, "even though I have sinned against thee." Psal. lxxi. 15, "My mouth shall

pauper." Evidem videbam omnes vivos, qui ambu- 15
labant sub sole, juvenis istius partibus adhærere qui
priori illi successurus est proximus. Nulla finis est 16
de cuncti populi sententiâ omnibus rebus quæ *tempore*
existunt suo et se coram, neque magis in isto
posteri lætabuntur; hoc quoque enim ceu halitus
est et ventosa cogitatio.

recount (number up) thy righteousness, thy salvation all day," בַּיְלָא קְדֻשֵּׁתְּפֹרוֹת, "although I know not the numbers of it." **הַאֲסִירִים** is contracted for **הַאֲסִירִים** to facilitate the pronunciation. The want of נ is indicated by the (־) under the ה, and if written out fully, it would be **הַאֲסִירִים**. For similar elisions, vid. Job xxxv. for **מַלְפִנָּנו**, Ezek. xxi. 33, **לְהַכְּבִיל**, for also 2 Sam. xix. 14, compared with xx. 9, &c. This only happens in cases where the ה and נ have the same vowel in the uncontracted form, for in the case of **הַאֲכָל** the (-) and (־:) are treated as the same.

נָולֶד must be repeated again with **בָּשָׂר**, "He who was born to a throne was born poor, and came naked out of his mother's womb."

Ver. 15. "It should seem that the children of Israel were " murmuring against Solomon with expressions of discontent, and " extolling Jeroboam who stood high in the esteem of the peo- " ple as appears from what we read in Scripture, Kings x. 11, " And the king knew what they were murmuring in their bed- " chambers; and he here as it were answers their words, and " says, 'I saw all the people going after the youth next in " succession, who shall accede after the king, and their eyes fail " with waiting for the time when he shall succeed to the throne " of the kingdom;' and he is called the youth next in suc-

בְּמַלְכָתֹו נוֹלֵד רֹשׁ : רָאִיתִי אֶת-בָּל-הַחַיִם הַמְּהֻלְבִּים 15
 תְּחִתְּ הַשְּׁמֶשׁ עַם הַיּוֹדֵה הַשְׁנִי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲמֵד תְּחִתְּיוֹ :
 אַיְזָקָעַ לְכָל-הָעָם לְכָל אֲשֶׁר-הִיה לְפָנֵיכֶם גַּם 16
 הַאֲחֶרְנִים לֹא יִשְׁמַחוּ בְּיִגְסִיזָה הַכָּל וּרְעִיוֹן
 רֹוח :

"cession, either (according to the simple interpretation of those words,) because he was to come after the then king, or, (still supposing Jeroboam to be here intended), since Rehoboam was "the king's son, and had more right to succeed to the kingdom than Jeroboam, Rehoboam might be called the first in succession, and Jeroboam the next." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The meaning of the word מְהֻלְבִּים here is nothing more than "living," (unless we choose to neglect the accents, and connect it with ם in the sense of "walking with," "adhering to,") and according to the accents the words אֶת-בָּל הַחַיִם הַמְּהֻלְבִּים וּבוּ are a hyperbolic expression for the whole Israelitish nation, and he says, "I saw the whole people of Israel along with, that is, on the side of the youth next in succession who is to succeed him i. e. the old king, and murmuring against him (the old king) in the words mentioned in the two preceding verses." Indeed the definite article ה before מְהֻלְבִּים shews that it is part of the subject and not of the predicate of the sentence; in other words that מְהֻלְבִּים and ם are not to be taken together. Mendlessohn does not make the two preceding verses represent the murmurs of the people at all, but according to his interpretation (which by the way has very little point in it or connexion with what precedes or follows it,) it is Solomon's own sentiment, and he would

THE EIGHTH SECTION.

17 שָׁמֶר רְגִלּוֹן כַּאֲשֶׁר תָּלַךُ אֶל-בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים וְקָרוֹב
לְשָׁמֶעָ מִתְתַּח הַכְּסִילִים וְבָח קִידְאִינִים יוֹרָעִים לְעִשּׂוֹת

render **מִדָּר**, “better off than,” a meaning which it frequently bears in this book, but is not so common as “better than.”

Ver. 16. “Indeed I have seen, (he says), that such is the “way of the people all along, that they dislike whatever they “have in their own times, and wish for new things every “morning, for they love change and alteration. The time “seems long to them, and it appears to them as if there was “no end or conclusion of all that they have in their own time; “for they are quite disgusted with it; but I have found that “posteriority who will arise after them will not be any better “pleased with the new king, and will choose novelties for “themselves. But this too (popularity) is a mere breath and “windy notion, and there is no substantial happiness in the “honour and praise of the people.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The preposition **לְ** before **כָּל-דָּעָם** denotes, “in the opinion of,” “according to.” In the idea of the people, there is no end, &c. **לְפִנֵּיכֶם** means, “in their own time,” as I have already observed at i. 10. **בָּו** means, in the new king.

Ver. 17. .“ He now begins to point out the desirable course “of action by means of which we may attain to true felicity,

SECTIO OCTAVA.

17 Cohibe pedem tuum cum ædem Dei adis; et melius est accedere ad audiendum quam sacrificii-oblatio stultorum, quippe qui nesciant se malum

"and eternal good. And he begins the subject with the service
"of God, observing that the fear of God should be upon thee
"continually, as is proper for one born of woman, who goes to
"pray before the presence of the King of kings, the Holy One,
"blessed be he. 'And know,' he says, 'that the drawing near
"to hear the word of God is better and more acceptable than
"a fool's sinning and offering a sacrifice to atone for it;' for
"‘to hear is better than sacrifice,’ as the prophets have admo-
"nished Israel at length on this subject. ‘For they know not,
"etc.’ Here he is giving the reason for his expression in that
"he calls the sinner a fool; he says, it is clear that the sinner
"is foolish and ignorant, and that it is on that account that
"he does evil; for if he knew the difference between good
"and evil, he would choose the good. And our Rabbins of
"blessed memory have said, ‘that no man is a sinner unless
"there be working in him the spirit of fatuity,’ so that the
"sinner is rightly called a fool.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. “Keep thy foot.” This is either a metaphor taken from one who entering a palace is careful not to soil the gorgeous carpeting with his feet; or from one who walks carefully to avoid slipping or falling in a place where if not careful he is very liable to do so. The קרי יתיר “רָגַלְךָ” on is, i. e. “the ‘is superfluous.”

facere. Ne præceps sis ore tuo, nec mens tua præ- 1
 properet verbum coram Deo proferre; nam Deus
 in cœlo est et tu in terrâ, quamobrem sint pauca
 verba tua. Sicut enim venit (i. e. constat) som- 2
 nium in multitudine negotiorum, ita et sermo stulti
 in multitudine verborum. Quotiescumque vovebis 3
 Deo votum, ne cuncteris id exsolvere; in stultis
 enim nil *Deo* gratum est; quodcumque voveris ex-

לִשְׁמָעַ is both to hear the word of God from the mouth of the priest, and to obey the commands of God, as in 1 Sam. xv. 22, where he says, “To hearken is better than sacrifice,” where “to hearken,” must mean, “to obey,” because this word **הִקְשִׁיב** corresponds to it in the other clause, of which the second is merely a poetic repetition in other words. Mendelssohn as well as the other Rabbinical commentators understand before **טוֹב** **מִתְחָת**, and render the passage thus, “And (know that) to draw near to hear is better than the sacrificing (**זִבְחָת**) of fools,” where, as Mendelssohn ingeniously observes, Solomon means by “fools,” the wicked, and explains in the next clause why he calls them so. This is decidedly preferable to the rendering which must be adopted if **קָרֹב** be taken in the sense of an imperative, viz. “Accede potius ut audias quam ut sacrificium offeras ritu stultorum,” as the phrase **מִתְחָת הַכְּסִילִים זִבְחָת** would thus be very elliptical, whereas according to the former version it signifies, “than fools’ offering sacrifice,” and **קָרֹב** is put for **הַקָּרוֹבָה**, “the drawing near.”

If **קָרֹב** be used here as an imperative, there would probably be, according to Hurwitz, an ellipsis of **הַקָּרוֹב** immediately after it.

Ver. 1. “He proceeds to admonish him who worships and “prays, not to pray hastily or precipitately, but with due regu-

CHAP.
V.

רֹעַ: אֶל-תִּתְבַּהֵל עַל-פְּיוֹךְ וְלִבְךְ אֶל-יָמָתָר לְהֹצִיאָ דָבָר 1
 לְפָנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים כִּי הָאֱלֹהִים בְּשָׁמִים וְאַתָּה עַל-הָאָرֶן
 עַל-כָּנוּ יְהוָה דְּבָרֶיךָ מַעֲטִים: כִּי בָּא קְחֻלּוֹם בְּרֵב 2
 עַנְנָן וְקֹול כְּסִיל בְּרֵב דְּבָרִים: כִּי אֲשֶׁר תָּדַר נְדָר 3
 לְאֱלֹהִים אֶל-תַּאֲחַז לְשָׁלְמוֹ כִּי אֵין חֲפֵץ בְּכִסְילִים

" lation of mind, for that 'God above sees thee, and hears thy words, and he is in heaven in the highest heights of loftiness, and thou upon earth; there is nothing lower than thee; therefore thou must not multiply words without due regulation of mind, lest thou be endangered.' " Mendlessohn.

Ver. 2. " As it has been paraphrased, **דָמָא דָתִי חֲלָמָא** **עַל הַרְדוֹרִי לְבָא בְּסֶגֶנְיָות גּוֹנוֹנִים**" i.e. 'Just as a dream comes upon the fancies of the heart with an accumulation of *different* matters,' i.e. like the natural dream which is made up of many different subjects and thoughts, without order or arrangement, so the voice of a fool comes out of his mouth with a multitude of words by chance and at random, without connexion, arrangement, or conclusion." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The phrase means, "made its appearance under (such a form)," i.e. (in the present instance) "consists in (it)." The voice of a fool means here his expressions in addressing the Almighty. **וְ** is here again a conjunction of comparison.

Ver. 3. " As I have commanded thee to keep watch over thy words, when thou art in the house of God; so it is necessary that thou shouldest take heed in every place and at every time to remember his name; if thou vowest a vow to him, keep that which hath been uttered with thy mouth, for

4 אַת אָשֶׁר-תִּתְּר שָׁלֵם : טֹב אָשֶׁר לֹא-תִּתְּר מִשְׁתְּקוֹר
 5 וְלֹא תִּשְׁלֵם : אֲל-תִּתְּנֵן אַת-פִּיד לְחַטִּיא אַת-בְּשֻׁרְךָ
 וְאַל-תֹּאמֶר לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי שְׁגַנְתָּ הִיא לִמְהִי קָצֶף
 6 הָאֱלֹהִים עַל-קְוָלָה וְחַבֵּל אַת-מַעֲשָׂה יְהִיד : כִּי בָּרְבָּ
 חָלָמוֹת וְהַבְּלִים וְרַבְּרִים תִּרְפָּה כִּי אַת-הָאֱלֹהִים

"there is nothing pleasing in fools who mutter responses and
 "observe religious festivals, while their heart is not with them."

Mendlessohn.

Ver. 4. "But know that abstaining from making vows is
 "not sin; as it is said in the Talmud, 'If thou refrain from
 "vowing, thou wilt not be guilty of sin.'" Mendlessohn.

Ver. 5. "Why should thy mouth be productive of sin and
 "wickedness in thyself, as it will be if thou dost not perform
 "what thou hast spoken with thy mouth. And say not before
 "הַמֶּלֶךְ, i. e. the messenger who comes to claim the eleemosy-
 "nary offering which thou hast devoted in public, that the vow
 "which thou hast vowed was a mistake. We may interpret
 "לְעָנוֹת אַת-הַנְּפָשָׁךְ, 'like,' to afflict oneself,
 "i. e. to fast. Why should God be provoked by what is ut-
 "tered by thy lips, so that he should destroy the work of thy
 "hands?" Mendlessohn.

NOTE. נְתַנֵּן, "Do not permit." So is used Gen.
 xx. 9, xxxi. 7, Numb. xxii. 13.

לְחַטִּיא is contracted for לְחַטִּיאָה הוּא. i. e. "that
 it was a mistake," "that you made the vow hastily and incon-
 siderately, and now refuse to perform it."

"Destroy the work, &c." i. e. plague thee. Surely it is not
 worth while to bring God's judgments upon thee by the utterance

4 solvito. Melius est quod non voveas, quam quod
 5 voveas et non exsolvas votum. Ne sinas os tuum
 te ipsum peccati reum facere, neque coram sacer-
 dotis legato dicas "errorem id fuisse;" cur offensus
 merâ voce tuâ Deus manuum tuarum opus de-
 6 struat? Nam in multitudine somniorum et vanita-
 tum verba quoque sint multa; at Deum timeto.

of a few thoughtless words. "Why should God be provoked?" i. e. "Why should you provoke God to plague you by a few careless words which you could so easily have suppressed?" Why should you involve your whole person in the guilt and consequences of sin, by the misuse of so small a member as the tongue?

Ver. 6. "He means, 'In all those dreams and fancies and "many vain things which come up into thy imagination, be sure "thou fear God, and that his fear be always before thy eyes. "Then thou wilt escape harm.'" Mendelssohn.

NOTE. רַב חֶלְמוֹת וְחַבְלִים means the ordinary and trifling affairs of the world, and Mendelssohn couples with this דברים, "and the generality of matters." "In all these thou shalt surely fear God, and have his fear always before your eyes," כי being used as it constantly is by the Talmudists as a particle of confirmation, as in Gen. xlivi. 10, "Unless we had loitered," כי עתה שָׂבַנְיָה פְּגַםִים, "surely we should now have returned this twice." I am more inclined to render it thus, "In the multitude of dreamy and vain matters, the ordinary affairs of the world, words also may be multiplied, i. e. we may use a superfluity of words about them if we like;" literally, "words too are many;" or חַרְבָּה may be taken to be the imperative to correspond with נַעֲמֵן, "Multiply words too if you will."

Si pauperis oppressionem et perversionem judicii et 7
 justitiae in civitate videris, ne hanc rem mireris;
 pollens enim super alium pollutem auctoritatem
 tenet, et super hos pollutiores alii. Et excellentia 8
 terræ in toto ejus constat; agri quoque domino

רַבָּה, “multiply,” corresponding to **רֹב**, “multitude;” and the rest will then be, “but fear thou God;” i. e. “but as for God, thou must not approach him with many words, but stand in awe of him.” This interpretation is far more in accordance with the accents than Mendelssohn’s; according to his rendering there would not have been any athnack (ן) at all in the verse, and the zakeph would not have been over the word **הַבְּלִים**, but over **רַבָּה**.

Ver. 7. “He here speaks with reference to those who “murmur against the political government and administration “of a state, who are mentioned above. If thou seest in a “state that sometimes they oppress the poor, and wrong the “man who has justice and right on his side, do not wonder “or feel surprise at this sight or at the king whose pleasure “thou mayest imagine this to be, for that otherwise he would “not remain an indifferent spectator when it is in his power to “prevent it. I say thou must not blame the king with it; for “in a state there is one great man in office above another to “superintend him, and each one in a rank higher only super-“intends the rank next below him, and so onwards from him. “And ‘there are great ones above them,’ i. e. to say, that the “great men all of them only superintend those men whom they “are immediately set over, those who are next below their rank “and degree: for such is the method of a regular administra-“tion, that each individual should have his own particular “charge; and it is impossible for him who is highest of all.

ירא : אָסֵעַשׂ קֶשֶׁת וְגִילָּל מִשְׁפָט וְצִדְקָה תִּרְאָה 7
 בְּמִדְיָנָה אֶל-תְּהִמָּה עַל-הַחֲפֹץ כִּי גִבְעָה מַעַל גִבְעָה
 שִׁמְרָן וְגִבְעָהִים עַלְהָם : וַיַּתְרֹן אָרֶץ בְּפֶל הַיָּא מֶלֶךְ 8

"viz. the king, to superintend every thing in detail which is "done under his government; but he leans for support on his "prime minister, and the prime minister on the princes, and "princes on the overseers, and so on from them. For super- "intendance of all things in detail belongs to God alone, who "fainteth not neither is wearied, which is not the case with "the mind of man. And accordingly you must not wonder if "the administration be not good in the highest degree in all "its details, nor free from every defect in all its parts. The "word גִילָּל is in a state of construction, and the absolute form "might be the same; for substantives which have five points " (i. e. a tzere and a segol) when in the absolute form, are not "altered in construction. Thus we find Lev. vi. 24, גִילָּל בְּגִבְעָה וְחַלֵּב טְרֵפָה."

Mendlessohn.

NOTE. חֲפֹץ merely means "matter," "affair," in this place. The Jewish commentator only says that גִילָּל might be the absolute form as well as the constructive, without concluding that it is exactly of the form חַלֵּב; for in reality its absolute form is גִילָּל, which we should have expected as having tzere under the last syllable to suffer no change in construction, but nevertheless becomes גִילָּר; and so we find גִילָּר and גִילָּן changed in construction, though these have also tzere under the ultimate. שִׁמְרָן means here, "in office" or "authority."

Ver. 8. "After first shewing that the king and princes are "not to be blamed because a government is not faultless in

9 לְשָׁרֶה נָעַבְדָ : אֶחָב בְּסֻף לֹא-יִשְׁבָע בְּסֻף וּמִ-אֶחָב

" all its details, he proceeds to say that if you would ascertain " the degree of excellence of a government, and how far one " state excels another, you must not look at details; for that " the excellence of a country consists in the entire state of it; " the superiority of it is exhibited in its general administration " and management, not in details; for it is impossible that " all these should be in complete perfection, as is known to " every intelligent man. He says, מלך לשָׁרֶה נָעַבְדָ, as much " as to say, 'It is clearly impossible for a king to do all the " business of an administration alone, without help from his " princes and his servants, and on that account the great must " necessarily be set one above another in office. Is not the " owner of a field, who is only king over a field of agricultural produce, served by others who do his pleasure? and it is " not possible for him to do without other labourers, or by himself, and how much less for a great king who rules over large " provinces, and a strong people?' It is clearly impossible that " his eyes should overlook every thing at once, as Jethro " says in his advice to Moses. We find elsewhere מלך with a ל, " as in the word מלך למוֹאָב, 'king of Moab.' And there is nothing strange " in the word מלך being applied to the owner of a field instead " of בעל; for so we find with regard to Araunah, that the Scripture calls him הַמֶּלֶך, 'the owner,' 'landlord,' 'all these did Araunah, the owner, give to the king,' and besides that it " was usual in ancient times, for a man who presided over the " tillage of a field to be called by the title 'King of the field,' " and to carry a staff in his hand after the manner of a regal " sceptre, as we find in the ancient poets." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. בְּפֶל דֵּיא. The Keri on דֵּיא is the antecedent of this, as masculine, would necessarily be יִתְּרִין, whereas

9 inserviunt alii. Qui amat argentum non argento satiabitur; et qui gaudet turbâ (satellitum), nullus erit

that of **הַיָּא** would be **אֶרְצָן**. With the reading **הַיָּא** of the Chethib the translation is, “The excellence of a land consists in the whole of it,” literally “all it;” for **כָל** must then be an adjective, since, if it were a substantive and in construction with **הַיָּא**, we should not have had **בִּכְלֵל** (which is a contraction for **בְּכָל**), but **כִּכְלֵל**, (because a noun in a state of construction never has **ה** prefixed). With the reading **הַיָּא** of the Keri, **אֶרְצָן** must stand as a nominative absolute, and the translation be, “As for the excellence of a land, it (**הַיָּא**) consists in the whole (land),” literally, “in all (the land),” or, “in the entire state,” “in the sum total;” in the first case **כִּכְלֵל** being supposed to stand for **בִּכְלֵל**, and in the second **כָל** being taken as a substantive, and to mean, “the whole,” “the sum total.” Mendelssohn adopts the reading of the Chethib, for he writes the word **הַיָּא** in his commentary, probably because this gives the more simple and unbroken construction, the general sense being the same with either reading. There are however grammatical objections to the reading of the Chethib which do not apply to the Keri, and which must have induced the Masorites to preserve the latter. In the first place, the usual method of expressing “in the whole of it,” would have been **בִּכְלֵלה**, (which is a contraction for **בְּכָל־הַיָּא** or **בְּכָל־הַיָּה**, the affix being substituted for the pronoun **הַיָּא**, and **כָל** or **כִּכְלֵל** which is a substantive in construction with **הַיָּא** being changed into **כָל** with a dagesh in the **ל** to compensate for the shortening of the vowel). (Similar forms to **בִּכְלֵלה** are **בִּכְלֵלה**, “the whole of it” (Egypt), at Ezek. xxix. 2, and **כִּכְלֵךְ**, “the whole of thee,” at Mic. ii. 12). And in the second place, if this ordinary form be discarded, and **הַיָּא** is to be written at full length, and **כָל** to be used as an adjective,

illi ex eâ proventus; quare hæc quoque vana est. Cum incremento opulentiae increscant quoque qui 10 eam consumant; et quis inde domino ejus fructus est præter oculorum suorum visum? Dulcis est 11 laborantis servi somnus sive parum sive multum comedenter; at divitis satietas non ei permittit dor-

the correct form to express “in all (of) it,” would be בְּדַיָּא הַכָּל, for an adjective with an article prefixed to it always follows the noun substantive, and therefore, by analogy, the pronoun, with which it agrees.

Some have rendered the latter clause of this verse, “The king is served by means of the field,” i. e. “The king is nothing without his country.” Others, “that the king be enslaved, as it were, and devoted to the field,” i. e. “to the agricultural interest,” translating the first clause thus, “The excellence or prosperity of a land consists entirely in this, &c.” But both these renderings are contrary to the accents, by which מֶלֶךְ and לְשֹׁהָה are closely united, but separated from גָּעֵבָד. The literal rendering of the latter clause is, “Agri quoque dominus inser-vitur.”

לְשֹׁהָה, “Owner of a field.” As other instances of לְ used merely as a sign of the genitive case, see מִזְמָר לְדָבָר in the headings of the Psalms, מִזְמָר לְשָׁלְמָה, and verse 11 of this chapter, where we have שְׁבָע לְעַשְׂרֵה, “the satiety of a rich man;” and Daniel i. 1, בְּשָׁנָת שְׁלוֹשׁ לְמִלְכָוֹת יְהוּקִים, “In the third year of Jehoiakim, &c.”

Ver. 9. “He speaks in blame of the love of money and “rank, and says, ‘He who loves money cannot eat that “money, or be satisfied with it. And he who likes to have “about him a retinue of men-servants and maid-servants to “wait upon him, sets his mind on a thing which cannot yield “him any profit.’ This is the meaning of לֹא תִּבְאַה, ‘There is

בְּהַמּוֹן לֹא תִּבְואָה גִּסְיוֹת הַבֵּל : בְּרֻבּוֹת הַטוֹּבָה 10
 רַבּוֹ אֲוֹכֶלֶת וּמַה-כְּשַׁרוֹן לְבָצְלָה בְּיַ אַסְ-רַאִית
 עִינֵּיו : מִתְּוִקָּה שְׁנַת הַעֲבָד אַסְ-מַעַט וּאַסְ-הַרְבָּה 11

“no profit.’ Every thing which man gains and earns by labour “is called תִּבְואָה. He will have no reward and no profit from “this retinue, so that that too is a vain expectation ; as he says “in conclusion.” Mendlessohn.

בְּ seems to be either, “takes delight in,” or as Mendlessohn renders it, “loves to be in,” “to be surrounded by,” &c.

NOTE. תִּבְואָה, “Non proventus erit illi.” Supply תִּבְואָה לוֹ.

Ver. 10. “If a man who loves a retinue have an accession “of wealth and property, he will have to procure more men and “women servants, and a household, and then the number of “those who live on it will be increased ; and thus there will be “no advantage for himself, but ‘the looking on.’ For since the “property is his, while others live on it, he has no good from “it except the pleasure of looking on.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The Masorites read for רַאִית עַיִן, רַאִית עַיִן, “The looking on of his eyes,” i. e. his pleasure in contemplating the comfort of the dependants who are fed at his expense.

Here we have followed by בָּעֵלֶת, just as in verse 12 of this chapter we have followed by בָּעֵלִין, which are instances of the use of בָּעֵלים in the sense of “a single owner.” בָּעֵל in construction in the singular is generally used to denote a person of the quality denoted by the following word, as בָּעֵל־אָנָּף, “an angry man,” בָּעֵל־עוֹף, “a winged creature.” For other instances of בָּעֵלים, “an owner,” vid. Is. i. 3, Exod. xxii. 29, 34, 36, xxii. 16, 11, &c.

12 יָאֵל וַהֲשֶׁבָּע לְעֹשֵׂר אִינְגָּנוּ מִפְּנֵי לֹו לִישָׁוֹן: יָשַׁ
 רָעָה חֹלֶה רָאֵתִי תְּחַת הַשְּׁמֵשׁ עֹשֵׂר שְׁמִיר לְבָעֵלְיוֹ
 13 לְרַעַתּוֹ: וְאֶבֶד הַעֲשֵׂר הַהְוָא בְּעַנְנֵן רָע וְהַזְּלִיד בָּן
 14 וְאַין בַּידֵךְ מָאוֹמָה: בְּאֵשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִבְּטַן אַפְּוֹ אַרְוֹם
 יְשֻׁבוֹן לְלִבְתָּה בְּשַׁבָּא וּמָאוֹמָה לֹא-יִשְׁאָ בְּעַמְלָלוֹ שְׁזַלְקָ
 15 בַּידֵךְ: וְגַם-זֹה רָעָה חֹלֶה בְּלַעֲמָת שַׁבָּא בָּן יַלְקָ

Ver. 11. “Behold, happier than he is the slave who “works all day, and from his being faint and tired lies down “and falls asleep, and his sleep is sweet to him. But the rich “man cannot sleep, for his satiety and the abundance of his “luxury suffer him not to rest.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Observe here, that we have another parallel case to מלך לשדה, as meaning owner of a field. The accents shew decisively here, as in that case, that שָׁבָע לְעֹשֵׂר means, “the satiety of a rich man,” and that the sentence cannot be construed, “But satiety does not permit to a rich man to sleep.” Besides in this case לוֹ would be redundant.

Ver. 12, 13. “‘There is a sore evil,’ i. e. sometimes the “wealth alone, because it suffers him not to sleep; and some-“times it may have been kept for him to his own hurt, because “it may perish through the design of a man of evil practices “who plunders by night, or of a robber who strikes him a mortal “blow, so that he dies in consequence of his wealth, and the son “whom he has begot has nothing left of his father’s property.

“חַיְלָה is a participle from root חַלֵּה, “to be sick,” or else it “is an adjective of form טוֹבָה, from the root חַלֵּל, with the sense

12 mire. Est malum ægritudine afficiens (*sive* incidens) quod sub sole vidi, divitiæ domino suo in
 13 ipsius damnum servatæ; quum perditæ sint istæ divitiæ casu quodam adverso, et filio quem genuit
 14 nihil prorsus sit in manu; quod quemadmodum egressus est ex utero matris suæ nudus iterum redditurus sit sicut venerit, nec quicquam prorsus labore suo acquisiverit quod secum auferat in manu.
 15 Hoc quoque *dico* est malum ægritudine afficiens (*vel* incidens) quod omnino sicut venerit ita sit

" of that word in the passage שָׁאַל הַיּוֹלֶה עַל רְאֵל, 'They shall light (fall) on the head' (of Joab), in which case רָעָה חֹלֶה would mean, 'an evil lighting on the sons of men,' or 'incident to them.' " Mendelssohn.

NOTE. רָעָה חֹלֶה is literally, "malum ægrum," "a sickly evil," "a disease;" and here, spoken of moral condition, "an error," "a defect;" thus vi. 2, עֲרֵלָה, "ægritudo mala." In both 12 and 15 a great error of judgment and practice is denoted. Here again the Masora mentions the reading נִנְעָד for נִנְעָן, which would give the meaning "through the designs and practices of a villain."

Ver. 14. NOTE. There is an evident quotation here from Job i. 21, where the very same Hebrew words occur.

אָשָׁע means here, "To take or receive," in the sense of acquiring.

קָلַשׁ, "Which he may cause to go away," i. e. "which he may carry away." This is a contracted form for קָלַשׁוּשׁ. This verse is part of the sentence beginning with verse 12, and is descriptive of the sore evil which he says he had noticed.

Ver. 15. "And this too would be a sore evil, even if the property is not destroyed and dissipated through the design

abiturus; et quid ergo prodest ei quod in ventum laboret? quodque omnibus diebus suis in tenebris 16

"of a villain, that he should have no son, for then in every respect as he came so he will go." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **כָּל־עַמְתָּה**. Kimchi and the Rabbinic commentators (vid. the **דְּמָלוֹת** בְּאֹר), and after them Buxtorf consider that this is an anomaly and that the regular form would have been **כָּל־עַמְתָּה** (after the form **הַבְּטָן**, 1 Kings vii. 20, "In the quarter of and corresponding to the projection.") This would certainly have been a more satisfactory reading; in the first place, because we should thus have had the prefix **כִּי**, "as," (which is changed into **כִּי** before another letter with sheva) to answer to **כִּי**, "so," at the beginning of the other member of the sentence; and in the next place, because **עַמְתָּה** never occurs without **לִ**, and with this prefix denotes, like **כָּנֵן**, "exact correspondence in position and dimensions," (as at Eccl. vii. 14, infra,) so that **כָּל־עַמְתָּה** would have the same sense as **כָּנֵן**, "exactly as," (vid. Gen. ii. 18, where **כָּנֵן** means, "exactly to match him, and to correspond with his tastes and desires.") As an explanation however of the present reading, I would suggest that **כָּל־עַמְתָּה** may be a euphonic contraction for **כָּל־לְעַמְתָּה**, and signify, "altogether corresponding to the way in which," i. e. "exactly as," like **כִּי**, Job xxvii. 3, "All the time that," i. e. "as long as," and therefore preclude the necessity of a preceding **כִּי**, like "as" to "so," and therefore preclude the necessity of a preceding **כִּי**, which indeed we do not always find, as in Hos. xi. 2, Jud. v. 15.

I think that Mendlessohn's idea on this verse, that Solomon intended by speaking of "the man's going as he came," particularly to allude to his having no son, must be allowed to be somewhat far-fetched. It seems more likely that no new

וְמַה יִתְרֹן לֹא שִׁיעַם לְרוֹחָה : גַּם כָּל יִמְיוֹ בְּחֶשֶׁךְ 16

case is introduced here, but that Solomon is merely recapitulating what he had just said, that it is a sore evil for a man to carry nothing away with him after all his labour in this life, or in other words, to leave it as he came.

Ver. 16. “ ‘I have noticed among men one who all his “ days eats in the dark;’ for the principal meal of the ancients “ was in the evening, and luxurious persons ate this meal in “ the company of their acquaintance, with lights and torches “ burning; whereas this niggardly person eats by himself in the “ dark, and is full of fear and faint-heartedness. ‘And should “ suffer vexation, and illness, and peevishness should be upon “ him.’ It is known by experience, that he who suffers much “ vexation falls into sickness, and that the sick man is more “ easily vexed than one in sound health. Consequently he says, “ ‘I have found among men one who suffers much vexation, and “ I have also noticed the illness which has consequently taken hold “ on him, and the peevishness (which is a farther degree than “ vexation,) which he has contracted in consequence of that ill- “ ness.’ **כַּעַם** is a verb praeterite, because the first syllable has “ a kametz, and the second a pathack.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Again, instead of supposing here the introduction of a fresh instance of mistaken principle and conduct, I prefer to regard the whole of this verse as included under the phrase in the preceding verse, **שֶׁר**; “What profit then is it, that he should labour for wind, and eat in the dark?” i. e. “in gloomy and moody parsimony?” Or again, we may include it all under **הַוְלֵה**, “This is a sore evil that he should go in all respects as he came, and yet should torment and vex himself through life to no purpose,” considering **וְמַה יִתְרֹן וּכֹ**, and the whole of verse 16, in parenthesis. But the former rendering, which I have adopted in the translation, is the more simple.

לו יאכל ובעם הרבה וחליו וקצף : הנה אֲשֶׁר־דָּאִתִּי
 אני טוב אֲשֶׁר־יִפְהַלֵּל לְאֹכֶל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת וְלִרְאוֹת טוֹבָה
 בְּכָל־עַמְלָו , שִׁיעַמֵּל תְּחִתָּה שְׁמַשׁ מִסְפָּר יְמִיחִינִי אֲשֶׁר־
 18 נְתַנוּ לְךָ הָאֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם חָלָקוּ : גַּם בְּלַהֲאָלָם

Aben Ezra ingeniously explains his eating in the dark by saying, that he is so busy all day that he has not leisure to eat till night. Rather it is a poetic description of the anxiety which torments him even at his meals, (which ought to be taken cheerfully), which together with vexation brings on illness, and consequent peevishness. *וְכַעַם רַבָּה*, “And that he should suffer much vexation.”

חָלֵי לוֹ, as Rosenmuller well observes, is for *חָלֵי לוֹ*, “Et aegritudo sit ei,” just as in Psal. cxv. 7, we have *קָרְבָּן לְהַמָּן* for *קָרְבָּן לְהַמָּן*.

וְקַצְף, “Et ira sit ei,” is to be supplied from the preceding word *חָלֵי*.

Mendlessohn in this place, as in one or two others, seems a little to forget the dignity of scriptural poetry. He interprets *בְּלִימָיו בְּחָשָׁךׁ יַאֲכֵל*, of the miser who will not afford to eat his supper by candle-light, but eats it in the dark out of parsimony; “the principal meal being in the evening with the ancients.” This is frivolous, as is likewise his interpretation of the words, “that they may have a good reward for their labour,” which I have already noticed. “Aliquando bonus dormitat.”

Ver. 17. “This then is that which is truly good, and “which is truly excellent, &c.;” that is to say, that ‘if substance “and treasures are the proper good of man, it can only be by “eating and drinking and seeing good done among others by “means of all his labour which he performs under the sun, i. e.

comedat, multumque vexetur, et ægritudo sit ei et
 17 morositas? En igitur quod bonum ego quod pul-
 chrum esse vidi *hoc est*, quod comedat quisque et
 bibat et bonum videat effectum ex omni labore suo
 quo sub sole fungitur per *totum* numerum vitæ
 suæ dierum quos Deus ei concessit, quippe qui
 18 *solus* ei sit fructus *laboris sui*. *Vidi* etiam quod

“ by being happy himself, and making others happy, for that is
 “ his real profit from it, not to heap up wealth and collect riches,
 “ which may perish through the design of a villain, or which
 “ he may leave to posterity ; for in this there is no substantial
 “ good for man.”” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. טוב אֲשֶׁר יִפְהַת Michaelis takes here to be merely a copulative conjunction, and renders it, “good and fair,” referring to Jer. xvi. 14, אָתָנוּ לֹא תִּשְׁרֵר לְכֶם חִנְנָה אֲשֶׁר, “And I will shew you no pity,” which may be rendered, “inasmuch as I will shew you no pity ;” and (more to his point), Hosea xii. 8, “Ephraim said, They shall not find in me שָׁעַן אֲשֶׁר חַטֹּאת,” “evil and sin,” “evil which is also sin ;” and here he would translate “the good thing, which is also the fair or excellent thing.” I have rendered the verse as if רַאֲתִי were understood after the second אֲשֶׁר, and so avoided this awkwardness of construction.

Mendlessohn explains לְרִאוֹת טוֹבָה, “to enjoy the happiness of oneself and others,” not “to enjoy prosperity,” as some translate it. The words may bear the latter sense ; but Mendlessohn’s interpretation is more consistent with a sentiment already expressed in iii. 12, that “there is nothing good for man except to be cheerful, and at the same time to do good ;” טוֹבָה means either “prosperity,” i. e. “one’s own happiness,” or “kindness,” i. e. “the promotion of the happiness of others.” In this instance it seems to unite these two meanings. For the use of כי הִיא חַלְקָן see note at vi. 6. רַאֲתִי means, “for this is all the profit he can derive from it (his labour).”

ad hominem cui dederit Deus opes et divitias, et copiam fecerit de illis comedendi et fructum illum suum capiendi et in labore suo lætandi, hoc ei donum Dei esse. Reminiscatur enim *quisque* non 19 multos esse dies vitæ suæ, sed cordis sui lætitiae Deum respondere.

Ver. 18. “‘But if God has given him wealth and riches, “and bestowed therewith the power and ability to eat of them,’ “(as he said before), ‘and obtain real profit from them, which “is to benefit others, and to see the good done of which it is “said in the preceding verse that it is his portion in life for “the world to come, and thus to rejoice in his labour with an “everlasting joy; all this is clearly from the hand of God;’ for “unless a man possess the power and ability to derive enjoyment “from his possessions and to do good with them, he may have “‘wealth which would only be injurious,’ as it is expressed elsewhere.

“**תַּחֲנֹן** is here again used for **תְּנִשֵּׁא**.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. In this verse and the preceding he is stating in fact exactly the same conclusion which he has before expressed in different words; viz. first, that what is best for man is to enjoy cheerfully the good things of this life, and exercise liberality to others, and secondly, that wherever a man is enabled by the possession of wealth, health, &c. to do so, and to make the right profit from the fruits of his labour, viz. to use them to do good to others, this is the free gift of God, and must be a matter of devout thankfulness to Him. Life is short, and therefore ought to be made the most of; and consequently if he have the power and inclination to make himself and others happy, he may be sure that these are given him by God.

יְלִקְחָה, as Mendelssohn has shewn, is here (18) the same as in (17) “his right and proper profit from his labour,” viz. to do good to others as well as to himself with the fruits of it.

תְּנִשֵּׁא is the infinitive from **נִשְׁאַנְתָּה**, “tollere,” “accipere.”

אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְךָ הָאֱלֹהִים עַשֶּׂר וְנֶכֶם וְהַשְׁלָטָו לְאֶכֶל
מִמְּפָנוֹ וְלִשְׁאָת אֶת-חֶלְקָו וְלִשְׁמָח בְּעַמְּלָו זֶה מִתְתֵּחַ
אֱלֹהִים הִיא : בַּי לֹא הַרְבֵּה יִזְכֵּר אֶת-יְמֵי חַיּוֹ בַּי 19
הָאֱלֹהִים מִעֵנָה בְּשִׁמְתַת לְבָו :

Ver. 19. "Let him remember the days of his life that "they are not many, that the days of man are short, and his "wants few; and why then should he heap up to no profit? "And he states that God responds in every respect to his "cheerfulness and approves of it and gives him His consent; "for He grants him wealth and substance and power to do with "them as is good in his eyes, (for 'he who desires to purify "himself is always assisted from heaven,')" (Bab. Talmud, "Treatise Yomah, Sect. III), "and removes from him all those "circumstances of constraint which might prevent him from "accomplishing his wishes." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The common rendering of the first part of this verse, "(ille qui illo dono Dei præditus est) non multum recordabitur dierum vitæ suæ," is not in accordance with the accents which disjoin **הַרְבֵּה** from **יִזְכֵּר**; besides it would be very strange that forgetfulness of the past should be spoken of as a great blessing.

Buxtorf renders **מִעֵנָה בְּשִׁמְתַת לְבָו** "respondeat, annuit laetiæ cordis ejus," considering the use of the verb **מִעֵנָה** with **בְּ** to be a phrase. Roscmuller instances the passages in which, when God is said to answer by means of fire, or in some other way, this construction is used, and translates "God answers him (as to his enquiries after happiness,) by giving him cheerfulness of heart." Mendlessohn seems inclined to render it, "furnishes him with all the means of enjoyment in his enjoyment, and thus expresses His consent to it and approbation of it," because

THE NINTH SECTION.

CHAP.
VI.

1 יְשֵׁשׁ רֹעה אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי תַּחַת הַשָּׁמֶשׁ וּרְבָה הִיא
 2 עַל־הָאָדָם : אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִתְנוּ לְהָאֱלֹהִים עֹשֶׂר וְנָכְבִּים
 וְכָבוֹד וְאִגְנָנוּ חָסֵר לִנְפָשׁוֹ , מִכֶּל אֲשֶׁר־יִתְאַזֵּה וְלֹא־
 יִשְׁלִיטֵנוּ הָאֱלֹהִים לְאַכְלֵל מִפְנֵוּ כִּי אִישׁ נָכְרִי יַאֲכִילֵנוּ

מענה is in the Hiphil, and therefore means, “causing to furnish,” “granting that which grants,” whereas in the sentence “God gives him corn and wine and wealth which give him enjoyment,” the word “give” might be expressed in both cases by the Kal of **עֲנָה**, as we find it used in Ps. LXV. 6, “Terrible signs hast thou granted us, O God,” and in Eccles. x. 9, “Money that furnishes (imparts) every thing.” The general sense of Mendlessohn’s rendering is the same as that of Buxtorf’s, and I have adopted it in preference to Rosenmuller’s in the Version.

Ver. 1, 2. “He here repeats the words of an objector “against the providence and judgments of God, and mentions “this instance in particular of an unsatisfactory state of things “in the world, that sometimes God gives wealth and riches and “honour to a man, so that if he choose he would not be in “want of any thing for himself of all that he could desire, but “nevertheless he has no profit from his possessions, but leaves

SECTIO NONA.

CAP.
VI.

1 “Est autem malum quod vidi sub sole frequens
 2 hominibus superincumbere; nempe quod cui largia-
 tur Deus divitias et opes et honorem, adeo ut nullâ
 prorsus careat omnium quas rerum cupiverit, non
 eidem copiam faciat Deus illis vescendi, sed alienus
 vescatur illis: hoc irrita res (*sive* hujus vitæ im-

“ his substance and treasures to others whom he did not beget,
 “ but who may be called strangers to him, as those from whom
 “ he has never received any benefit in the world. ‘Is not this,’
 “ he says, ‘a sad defect in our condition?’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **רַבָּה** means “numerous,” “general,” “extensive;” the latter is probably the sense here. “It prevails over men extensively;” “it is very common in the world;” as Rosenmuller renders the passage, “Und ist gemein bei den Menschen.” **וְאֵינֶנּוּ חִסְכָּר לְנַפְשׁוֹ** literally, “And he is in want of, wants nothing for himself of all that he desires,” i. e. “all whose wants are supplied.” It is remarkable that Solomon has already applied the same phrases **רַעַת רַבָּה** and **חֹזֶלֶת רַעַת** to the same case, viz. that of a man who acquires wealth by hard toil, and never lives to enjoy it, except that for the phrase **רַעַת חֹזֶלֶת**, “a sore evil,” or “a prevailing evil incident to mankind,” he here uses **חַלִּי רַעַת**, “a bad sore or disease,” which when spoken of “a moral defect in the constitution of the world,” as in this case, where the Preacher is detailing the murmurs of objectors against divine

perfectio) est et malum vitium. Si gignat hic censem, et anni *eius* sint multi, et dies annorum sint plurimi, sed ipse nunquam opulentia ista perfruatur neque exequiae sint ei, abortivum eo beatius esse praedicarem; quippe quod frustra nascatur, et obscure efferatur, et cuius nomen obscuritate obruatur;

providence, means a “bad or serious defect.” The sense is analogous to that of בָּלֶבֶל as used here and in other passages of this book preceding and following, where it is applied to certain circumstances in the constitution of the world and its inhabitants, (as implying something apparently “futile,” “unsatisfactory,” and in fact, “a moral difficulty which cannot be solved,”) and always in a querulous or sceptical spirit, which is afterwards removed by more just reasoning and more enlarged views afterwards developed, as in the present chapter. In such cases I have chosen to render בָּלֶבֶל, “an unsatisfactory thing.” The occurrence in this verse of the word לִלְלַי, which must mean “a moral disease or defect,” renders “ægrum,” “ægritudine afficiens,” the most probable translation of the word חֹלֶה above, where “a sickly evil,” “a malady,” as applied to a man’s moral condition, would mean as it does here a defect in that condition.

Ver. 3. “And though his treasures be great all the days of his life, while yet his mind is never satisfied with what he longs for, happiness, because he does not enjoy his prosperity himself, or do good to others, and neither benefits himself or others with what God has bestowed upon him, and besides has no honourable burial or good name, I pronounced the untimely birth to be better off than he.

“מִתְנָשֵׁא. It is usual in poetry to speak of a collection of things by the names of even numbers, as a thousand, a hundred, twenty, instead of using uneven numbers.” Mendelssohn.

וְהַכָּל וְחַלִּי רֹעַ הוּא : אִם־יוֹלֵד אִישׁ מֵאָה וָשֶׁנִּים 3
רַבּוֹת יְחִיָּה וּרְבָּה , שִׁיחִיו יְמִינְשָׁנוּ וְנִפְשָׁו לְאַתְּשָׁבָע
מִזְהֻטּוֹבָה וְגַסְ-קְבוּרָה לְאַתְּחִיתָה לוֹ אַמְרָתִי טֹוב
מִפְנֵי הַנִּפְלֵל : כִּי־בְּהַכָּל בָּא וּבְחַשָּׁךְ יָלֵךְ וּבְחַשָּׁךְ 4

NOTE. With supply **ילדי מאה** from **ילדיים**.

We have here again in the words **וָשֶׁנִּים רַבּוֹת יְחִיָּה וּכְוָן** the same indifference that I already pointed out about using the singular or plural of the verb **יְחִי**, respecting a collection of things.

“While yet his appetite has not full enjoyment of the prosperity,” i. e. the prosperity and blessings described in the preceding verse. **ונִפְשָׁו** is here put for the man himself, his powers of enjoyment for “himself.” The **וְ** before **נִפְשָׁו** means, “while yet,” or “yet since.”

“No honourable burial is his,” because his wealth has prematurely fallen into the hands of a stranger.

נִפְלֵל abortivum quia **נִפְלֵל** mortuum ex utero instar immaturi fructus. The objector is here picturing the hapless lot of the man within whose reach God seems to have placed happiness, but who yet is denied the enjoyment of it. In the end of the last verse **חַלִּי**, “sickness,” is a verbal from **חֲלַד**, “to be sick,” just as **רַמִּי**, “quietness,” in Ps. lxxxiii. 2, is from **רַמָּה**, “to be quiet.”

Ver. 4. “For the untimely birth comes in vain, as it is “here in vain, without suffering any pain, or bearing chastisement, for it feels nothing; and it departs in darkness, and has “never seen happiness or wished for it; and its name is concealed in the dark; and it leaves no fame or remembrance in “the earth.” Mendelssohn.

Ver. 5. “And in this respect too the abortion is happier

5 שָׁמֹן יְבִשָּׂה : גַּם־שָׁמֶשׁ לְאַדְּרָאָה וְלֹא יָדֻעַ נַחַת לְוָה
 6 מִזְהָה : וְאֵלֹא חִזָּה אֲלֹפָה שְׁנִים פְּעָמִים וְטוֹבָה לֹא
 7 רָאָה הָלָא אַל־מָקוֹם אַחֲרַ הַבָּל הַוִּילָךְ : בְּלִ עַמְלָ

"than he, that it hath never seen or known the sun of prosperity so as to long for it; whereas he is longing all his life for greater prosperity than he has, and does not attain it, and so has no rest, and his desire is sickening to his heart, and fatal to his soul. The untimely birth has more tranquillity than the rich man who has no power to use his wealth." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. To render שָׁמֶשׁ, "the sun of prosperity," gives indeed a good sense, but seems rather forced. The latter half of the verse is literally, "There is more tranquillity to this than to that;" i. e. to the abortion than to the rich man, because it sees nothing of the troubles of life. The Hebrew is abrupt; but we may supply "so that" before נַחַת, "Besides it has never seen or known the sun, so that it has more tranquillity than he."

Ver. 6. NOTE. When he comes to the end of his life, even if it have been a long one, since he has not enjoyed his prosperity, he is no better off than the abortion; both are at the end of their earthly existence, and neither have had any enjoyment.

טוֹבָה לֹא רָאָה. I have said at ch. v. 17, that **טוֹבָה** means either "prosperity," i. e. "one's own happiness," or "kindness," i. e. "the promotion of the happiness of others," and that it seems there to bear a double sense. Its meaning here must be the same as in vi. 3, and therefore restricted to the former, "prosperity." So it is used in Ps. cxi. 5. It often means the "Divine kindness to man," as in Ps. lxxv. 11, lxxxvi. 17, Neh. vi. 19. In Ps. xvi. 2, its sense is ambiguous; "Thou hast said

5 quodque solem etiam nec viderit nec noverit, ita ut
 6 major est huic quam illi quies (*sive* tranquillitas);
 et etiamsi mille iterumque annos vixerit, neque
 prosperitate *quā potitus sit* tamen fruitus sit; nonne
 7 abit uterque in eundem locum. Omnis est usque
 labor hominum gulæ suæ causâ; ita et mens (hu-

(O my soul) to Jehovah, ‘Thou art my Lord, my prosperity (or ‘my kindness,’ i. e. ‘He who is kind to me’); there is none that surpasses thee. As for the holy in the land and the excellent, all my delight is in them.’” Such is the rendering agreeably with the accents. Here and in verse 3, as well as in v. 17, רָאָה has the same meaning as in the phrase רָאָה חַיִם at ix. 9, viz. “to enjoy,” in which sense it is usually followed by בָּ.

The מְקוֹם אֶחָד is of course “the grave.” Here again we have הַבָּל in the sense of “both.”

Ver. 7. “לְפִיהוֹן, that is, ‘for the sake of his mouth,’ that “it may be satisfied with food; and this is never finally effected “all his life long; and just so his mind never attains its desires, “for they are great and without end. תָמִילָא; when the mind “attains all its wishes and desires, it is said to be satisfied, or “literally ‘filled.’ As we find in Exod. xv. 9, תָמִילָתוֹ נֶפֶשׁ, “‘my mind shall be satisfied with them, i. e. with defeating “and plundering them.’” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The objector here suggests another ground of repining against the condition of mankind on earth, viz. that just as man devotes all his bodily labour to secure himself a supply for his bodily appetites, and continues all his life to do so, like the individual described above, as though they could never be furnished with a sufficient supply, so his mind can never satisfy itself with intellectual acquirements. The conjunction יֵ is here one of comparison. דִּבְרֵפֶשׁ used here in the abstract means

mana) nunquam satiatur. Quænam est *in hæc re* 8
sapienti stulti præstantia? quid docto prodest pau-
peri quod contra vitam grassetur? (*sive* luctetur?)
Melior est visus oculorum excursione mentis; *hæc* 9

"the mind of man." He thus repines at the unsatisfactoriness of the accumulation of knowledge as well as of wealth.

Ver. 8. "He proceeds with the words of the objector. "For what advantage, &c.; i. e. what necessary advantage? "that is, allowing that the wise man has some advantage over "the fool, this can be only if they are equal in their condition "in this life; but what does the intelligent poor man effect "who acquires great and glorious stores of knowledge, while "he continues poor and destitute? What good is it to him to "struggle against life, i. e. to seek only those things which are "adverse and prejudicial to the life of man, never to be merry "or indulge himself nor to eat or drink enough to satisfy his "appetite, but to be always storing his mind with the discon- "veries of philosophy?" Mendlessohn.

NOTE. I am inclined to explain the verse in this way. What advantage in this respect has the wise and well-informed man over the fool, i. e. the ignorant man? i. e. What advantage has he over the fool as to the satisfactoriness of his pursuits, (spoken of in the last verse)? Does the intelligent poor man, who is always pursuing literary researches, and struggling against mental and external difficulties at the same time, derive satisfaction from those researches? He says, "The learned poor man," because his case affords the means of making observation on the satisfactoriness of mental possessions by themselves, and complains that this is no greater than that of the possession of worldly wealth. The Septuagint renders לְהַלֵּךְ נָכַר דִּתְנִים in a way which seems to coincide with Mendlessohn's interpreta-

הָאָרֶם לְפִיהוּ וְגַם־הַנֶּפֶשׁ לֹא תִּמְלָא : בַּיּוֹם מֵהַיּוֹתָךְ
לְחַסֵּם מִזְרָחֲכָסִיל מִהַּלְעָנִי יָדָע לְהַלֵּךְ נֶגֶד הַחַיִּים :
טוֹב מִרְאָה עִינִים מִהַּלְךְ־נֶפֶשׁ גַּם־זֹהַה הַבָּל וּרְעוּית 9

tion, viz. πορευθήναι κατενάντι τῆς ζωῆς, though Desveux pronounces it to be “absolute nonsense.” It means, “that advancement in knowledge which involves a struggle against all the difficulties which nature and the circumstances and conditions of human life throw in its way.” The word חַלְקָה here is well expressed by the Latin, “grassari,” “incedere.” Mendlessohn mentions this passage among the “contradictions discussed in the latter part of his Preface,” (vid. page 86), and refers to his Commentary. At page 81, he speaks of the “wisdom” here alluded to as rather religious than scientific. The Rabbinic commentators remark that יָדָע is intransitive here, and that it is separated by the accent zakeph (:) from the following word, so that it is joined as an adjective with עַנִּי, and is equivalent to חַכְמָה.

Ver. 9. “He goes on to say in the words of the objector, “‘Is not that which the eyes see clearly and sensibly better for man than all that the mind struggles after in dark thoughts and secret reflections, which have nothing substantial in them and do not come under the perception of the senses but are a mere breath and windy notion?’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. “Better than the vain struggles of the mind are even the possessions of worldly wealth, which you can see and call your own. This too, i. e. excursive speculation is mere vanity, רְעוּית רְחוּת.” This phrase is here used as before in a complaining and repining sense. I would here observe that the word רְעוּית is synonymous with רְעֵן which we find in Dan. v. 6, in the sense of “thought,” “idea.” וְרַעֲנָנִי יְבַהֲלֹגֵת (Chaldee), “and his thoughts troubled him.”

- 10 רוח : מה-שְׁחִיה בָּבָר נִקְרָא שְׁמוֹ וַיְזַע אֲשֶׁר-הַוָּא
 11 אָרֶם וְלֹא-יַזְלֵל לְרִין עַם שְׁהַתְּקִיף מִמְּנוֹ : כִּי יִשְׁ-
 12 דְּבָרִים הַרְבָּה מִרְבִּים הַבָּל מַה-יִזְתַּר לְאָרֶם : כִּי
 מִי-זְרֻעַ מַה-טוֹב לְאָרֶם בְּחִינִים מִסְפֵּר יְמִיחָנֵי הַבָּל
-

מִהְלָךְ under the word (.) is put for a cholem (.), on account of the Makkeph following it.

הַלְּךָ and מִהְלָךְ in the last verse are the infinitive of preceded by prepositions, and used substantively for “excursive speculation.”

Solomon proceeds in the next verse to answer the objections contained in the last nine verses, beginning at vi. 1.

Ver. 10. ‘Whatever each man has been, “i.e. whether poor or rich and so on, his name, (i. e. the name “of his condition) had already been assigned, and it was fixed “respecting him before he was born in the previous will of “the Creator that he was to be so,’ (as it is said respecting “Cyrus, ‘I knew thee by name,’); that is, ‘it was already fixed “from of old by the decree of the Creator what each man was “to be in his time,’ so that the murmurers complain in vain; for “the Divine decree cannot be changed, and consequently it is “proper that living man should not murmur but sit ‘in silence “and submission,’ for that ‘He has laid it upon him.’ (2 Sam. “iii. 28.)” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. שְׁם is used here in the sense of “condition, quality;” thus it is frequently used in the Psalms for the character or attributes of God: “According to thy name, i. e. thy excellence, so is thy praise, &c.” Ps. xlvi. 10; and so in Ps. cii. 21, where it can have no other sense; and קְרָא is often used for “to determine, name specifically;” as in Is. xliv. 7, “Who as I?” קְרָא וַיִּגְדֹּה “shall determine and proclaim it,” “announce

10 quoque *enim* vanitas est et inanis cogitatio." Quæcunque fuerit dudum cujusque insignita erat nomine conditio, notumque *dudum* erat quid quisque futurus esset; adeo ut nequeat certare cum eo qui 11 potentior est ipso. Multæ enim res sunt quæ *solummodo* augent vanitatem: quid prosunt homini. 12 Quis enim novit quid sit homini in vitâ bonum

it before it come to pass," where the prophet is speaking of the power of God to foretell specifically what is about to happen.

The antecedent of the pronominal affix in שָׁמָן is אַדְםָן, "each man," to be supplied from the following clause.

"*וּנוֹתֵעַ* וּנוֹתֵעַ", means, "And each man was known beforehand, what he was to be." It has been rendered, "And he is known that he is man;" but this sense would require the order in the text to be "אַדְםָן הוּא אַשְׁר נֹתֵעַ".

הַיִּקְרָא is an adjective. הַ having crept in between the וּ and הַ, the word דָרְקִירָא was supposed to be a verb Hiphil. The Masorites say the הַ is superfluous. לִגְיָה is "litigare," and the sense of the latter half of the verse is, "so that it is impossible and out of the nature of things for a man to enter into judgment with and call to account him who has such absolute and eternal power over his destiny."

Ver. 11. "He mentions another argument against those objections, that though there be many things which the poor intelligent man is in want of, behold they only increase vanity and windy notions, and what is the good of them to man?" Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Supply at the end of this verse, "And why then should man complain of the want of them?"

Ver. 12. "לְצַדְקָה, i. e. a shelter from the light of the sun, under which men seek protection and refreshment in summer; and in this book it is an expression applied to worldly good, in which

per numerum dierum vanæ ejus vitæ, quod tegminis illos loco sibi fingat? quum quis certiore eum faciet quid post eum sub sole futurum sit? Me-
lius est aliquando nomen *bonum* bono unguento,
et dies mortis hominis die ejus nascendi. Præstat 2

CAP.
VII.

“ man enjoys himself for a season, as we find, ‘בָּאֵל חִכְמָה בָּאֵל בְּשָׁקֶךָ.’ He means, ‘If a man knew what was good for him in this world during the term of his life-time, he might be inclined to say, ‘Behold, I will make the days of my life as a shelter to seek protection and enjoyment in, so that my lot may be one of cheerfulness; I will not provide or care about what may be behind me, אַפְּנֵי, i. e. in the direction behind me, among other men of the world beside me,’ like a man who sits under a shelter and trusts in it for a season while there is no one to tell him what may be behind him under the sun, i. e. in the sunshine, where the shade does not extend or give shelter. But this cannot be the case, for in truth man does not know what is good for him in this world.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. בָּאֵל וַעֲשֵׂם בָּאֵל means, “that he should make them as a shelter,” i. e. “that he should act as if his life-time was something he could reckon on with security.”

“אַשְׁר מֵיד וּבוֹ,” “whereas there is no one to warn him of any future calamity that may be threatening him as it were from behind on the earth, תְּחִתַּת הָשָׁמֶן;” for this I think is all that is meant here by that phrase, and such is the meaning it has always borne in this book. Mendlessohn’s interpretation of the passage is exceedingly ingenious, and the only one at all satisfactory; but it is rather forced where he attempts to carry out the metaphor of the shade. אַשְׁר means, “inasmuch as.”

Ver. 1. “The diligent man has really no advantage over

וַיַּעֲשֵׂם בְּצָל אֲשֶׁר מִיְגֵּד לְאָדָם מִהִיאִתָּה אֶחָרִיו
CHAP. VII.
תַּחַת הַשְּׁמֶשׁ : טֹב שֵׁם מִשְׁמָן טֹב וַיּוֹם הַפְּנִיתָה
מִיּוֹם הַוְּלֹדוֹ : טֹב לְלִכְתָּא-בֵּית-אָכֵל מִלְכָתָא-אָל-²

"the intelligent poor man, although the latter be struggling against life; since what is it that can really be called good in life? Come and see how many uncertainties there are in this matter, sometimes a name and good reputation are better than the precious ointment with which kings are anointed, or with which persons perfume themselves for delight; and a funeral-day better than a birth-day, for death ushers man into that real life which has no death after it." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. טֹב שֵׁם מִשְׁמָן טֹב וַיּוֹם הַפְּנִיתָה
we find in Is. v. 7, the famous paronomasia, וַיְקַרְּבָּ לְמִשְׁפְּט וְהַפְּנִיתָה צָעַקה
וַיְקַרְּבָּ לְמִשְׁפְּט לְצִדְקָה וְהַנְּגָה צָעַקה ; and we have a somewhat similar figure, an *αμφιθολία*, in ver. 6, ch. ibid. בְּקוֹל הַסִּירִים תַּחַת הַסִּיר, and in Jud. x. 4, we are told that the sons of Jair rode on thirty עֲזָזִים, "asses," and had as many עִירִים, "cities." בַּיּוֹם טֹבָה דָּהָה בְּטוֹב וַיּוֹם רָעָה רָאָה.

He is pointing out, that sometimes those things which are most esteemed are less valuable than those which are less esteemed.

ט is here written large, this being one of the alphabet of large letters scattered through the Bible, which with many other marks were intended by the Masorites as a check on transcribers.

The literal rendering of the last clause is, "The day of one's death may be better than the day of one's being brought forth."

Ver. 2. "If you see the wise man going to the house of mourning, and the rich fool to a house of entertainment,

בֵּית מִשְׁתָּחָה בְּאַשֶּׁר הוּא סָוף כָּל-הָאָדָם וְהַנִּי יִתְּנוּ
 3 אַל-לְבֹז : טֹוב בַּעֲם מִשְׁחֹק כִּי-בְּרֻע פְּנִים יִיטְּבָ
 4 לְבָב : לְבָב חֲכָמִים בְּבֵית אַבְל וְלְבָב בְּסִילִים בְּבֵית
 5 שְׂמָחָה : טֹוב לְשָׁמָע גַּעֲרַת חָכָם מֵאִישׁ שָׁמָע שִׁיר
 6 בְּסִילִים : בַּי בְּקוֹל הַסִּירִים תְּחַת הַפִּיר בֵּן שְׁהָק

“think not in thy heart that this is bad for the former and good for the latter; for sometimes it is good to go to the house of mourning, since death is the end of all men, and the living will lay to heart there, (i. e. in the house of mourning) where he is going and what he will be at his end.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **אַבְל** is almost invariably “luctus funereus,” “funeral wailing,” and such must be its sense here. Otherwise what can be meant by, “for that (**אַבְל**) is the end of every man, of all mankind?” is **תִּתְּאַלְּלֵב** used here in exactly the same sense as **שִׁים אַלְּלֵב** in Isaiah xlvi. 25 and xlvii. 7, where serious consideration and reflection is implied. See also Eccles. ix. 1.

Ver. 3. “How can a man know what is good for him in his transitory life? For we see that sometimes vexation and suffering will be better for him than merriment and laughter; and consequently sadness is not always bad, nor merriment always good for man; for sometimes in sadness of the face the heart is cheerful.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Mendlessohn has commented on this verse at some length in his Preface, (vid. page 82.) **יִטְּבָ** in this place may either mean, “be cheerful,” or be in a good and well-regulated state, and free from the effect of vexation or other passions.

aliquando ire in domum luctūs quam ire in domum convivii, quoniam finis est ille (sc. funereus luctus) omnium hominum, atque *ibi* vivus finem *suum* menti 3 applicabit. Melior est *aliquando* tristitia risu; in vultūs enim severitate bene se *aliquando* habebit 4 cor. Mens sapientum in ædibus luctus, et mens 5 stultorum in ædibus lætitiae *versatur*. Melius est objurgationem sapientis auscultare, quam ut quis 6 auscultet *adulatoriam* cantionem stultorum. Qualis

Ver. 4. “It is not in the house of constant feasting and “mirth that the happiness of man is really found. On the “contrary the wise do not close their eyes from beholding the “afflictions and troubles of the sons of men, but go to the house “of mourning, and comfort him who is in hard case, and cheer “those who are in bitterness of soul, and by their conversation “raise up the fallen; and this is the happiness they delight in, “and the prosperity they really desire. Not so the fools. They “have no enjoyment but in the house of feasting and revelry; “and if they see ‘failing knees,’ they hide themselves from “them.” Mendlessohn.

Ver. 5. “If the wise man chide thee, and turn to thee an “angry look, be not sullen at his reproof; for it is better to be “listening to his rebuke than to the song of praise of fools; “for the reproof of a wise man profits the soul, but the song of “praise of fools corrupts it.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. ‘*רִזְקָה* must mean here, “a song of praise,” “an address of flattery;” otherwise there is no antithesis whatever between the clauses of the sentence; and so it has generally been rendered.

Ver. 6. “For like the noise of the thorns under a covered “cauldron set over a fire of clipped brambles, which blaze and

enim est spinarum sub ollâ crepitus, talis est stulti
risus; hic quoque vanus est. Oppressio enim *stulti*⁷
vesanum faciet sapientem, munificentia autem men-
tem ejus opprimet. Præstat postera pars negotii⁸

"crackle far more than wood which is more esteemed and
"valuable (for logs of oak and pine do not crackle); so is the
"laughter of the despicable fool, who makes his voice heard to
"a distance among men, and whose mouth is full of unbounded
"and licentious laughter. The noisy mirth of such an one is
"vain and brings no good, like the crackling of thorns which is
"useless and gives no heat to that which is boiling in the
"cauldron." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The sense as indicated by the connexion of the passage must be that the joking of the flattering and insincere parasite is really as unprofitable to him who listens to it for amusement and gratification as the crackling blaze of thorns is for the boiling of a pot, and that it will at last be found to be so.

Ver. 7. "It is true that if a wise man sees the oppression
"done in the world, the tranquillity of the wicked and the
"foolish, and their overbearing conduct towards just and wise
"men, he will be ready to turn mad, as though he went out
"of his mind; and if the fool has the liberality in a fit of
"greatness of mind to open his hand to the poor man who has
"understanding, he will by so doing break that poor man's heart
"i. e. so distress him as entirely to deprive him of his mind and
"reason; for the kindness of a fool is harder to bear than his
"oppression and cruelty." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The words נָבָל וְמַנְחָה do not agree in gender, the latter being feminine; so that, as Aben Ezra remarks, some word between them must be lost. The sense therefore is not quite complete. All we can gather from this verse and the

הַפְּסִיל גָּמֵדֶת הַבָּל: בַּי הַעֲשָׂק יְהוֹלֵל חָכָם וַיַּאֲבַד 7
אַתְּלֵב מַתְנָה: טֻוב אַחֲרִית בָּבְרָ מְרַאשְׁתָּו טֻוב 8

context is that the general sense of the passage must be, that to a wise man nothing will be so intolerable as the favour of fools, i. e. their praise or their liberality. He would rather be suffering from their wanton oppression and unreasonable caprice, which is sufficiently hard to bear and is enough to drive him mad. But the commendation of fools would be so intolerable to him, that it would quite break his heart.

Ver. 8. "Nevertheless it is not proper for a wise man to " go mad at seeing oppression. Let him only call to mind that " the end of a business is better than its beginning; for when a " thing is only beginning, we do not know how it will turn out " at last; and so the patient man who promotes love, and keeps " silence before God and waits for him, may be better off " eventually than the high-spirited who kicks and murmurs " much against God and the ways of his providence." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. נְבָנָה, and אַרְךָ, of which נְבָנָה is the construct form, are both adjectives. I do not think with Mendlessohn that this verse is at all intended to qualify the preceding. In the last he is merely expressing the strong disgust which a wise man ought to feel at the liberality or approbation of fools, in order to shew that blame is sometimes to be preferred to praise. But here, and in the two next verses, he proceeds to recommend submission to the Divine disposal and that spirit of patient waiting to see what will be the final result of the decrees of providence which is so opposite to the spirit of captious murmurers whose objections are mentioned in the former part of this section; for it is to be recollect that the whole of this

9 אַרְךֵּרִוָת מִגְבָּה רֹוח : אֶל-תִּכְחַל בְּרוֹחַ לְכָעָם כִּי
 10 בָּעֵם בְּחִיק בְּסִילִים יָנוּת : אֶל-תִּאֲמַר מָה הַזָּה
 שְׁחִימִים הָרָאשָׁנִים הַזָּה טוֹבִים מִאֶלְהָה כִּי לֹא
 11 מִחְכָּמָה שָׁאַלְתָּ עַל־זָה : טוֹבָה חִכָּמָה עַסְ-נְחָלָה

passage is an answer to them. He says, “The end of a thing may be better than it at first promised to be; and consequently the patient man, who waits to see the end of it without murmuring or restlessness, may find himself better off at last than he who has been impatient and precipitate.

Ver. 9. “Be not hasty in the beginning of a thing to “conceive vexation at what thine eyes see of the ways of the “providence of God; for it is in the bosom of fools that such “anger rests; since the ways of supreme providence are al-“ways in perfect goodness, as is necessarily the case with Him “who is good and does good to all; and if man knew all the “details and mysteries of providence, there is no doubt that all “such anger would be appeased and such vexation set at rest; “and that he would ever be rejoicing in the ways and attri-“butes of supreme providence, and praising it; and consequent-“ly such vexation is generated only in the lap of folly and “defect of understanding.” Mendlessohn. See the Preface.

NOTE. “Vexation will rest,” יָנוּת. So Proverbs xiv. 33, בְּלֹב בְּכֹו תְּנִית חִכָּמָה, i. e. “It is cherished.” Mendlessohn has a very interesting discussion in his Preface on the Biblical view of anger and other passions as displayed by a child of man, and as said to be displayed by the Deity in his dealings with men.

Ver. 10. “Shouldest thou be brought down from thy rank “and thy wealth, say not, ‘How did it happen?’ as fools say to “themselves when their riches and treasures perish. In such

9 primordiis ejus; præstat lensus animi superbo. Ne præceps sis ad vexationem concipiendam; vexatio enim in sinu stultorum *tantum* locum habebit.
 10 Ne dicas, “Quî factum est ut dies priores his *presentibus* fuerint meliores?” parum enim sapien-
 11 ter de istâ re interrogares. Utilis est *quidem*

“case, it seems to them as if the original order of things must have been changed; but the intelligent man knows that it is just the same as before, and that the supreme ordinances are left just as they were; only that the recipients of the Divine bounty are changed, each according to his respective portion.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **מִשְׁאַל** means here, “Thou wouldest have asked.” Since there is no subjunctive mood in Hebrew, the tenses of the indicative are necessarily used to supply its place, and the context will generally indicate when this is the case. Here there can be no doubt that it is so. The same is the use in Hebrew when the potential mood is required, as I have already noticed several times in this book where I have translated the future tense by “may,” &c.

Ver. 11. “He says, ‘If whilst thou wast rich, and owner of an inheritance, thou hast perceived that wisdom is valuable along with an inheritance; now that thou hast lost that inheritance, thou wilt find that wisdom has superior advantage for man to an inheritance. 12. For as a man can trust in the protection which the possession of money affords him, so he may trust in that which the possession of wisdom affords; and in this respect at least they are equal in value; but the superior advantage of the possession of wisdom is that it can maintain him who possesses it when he is destitute of every thing else.’” Mendlessohn.

sapiencia cum hæreditate, sed præstantioris apud illos qui solem aspiciunt utilitatis. “Idem enim est 12 sub tegmine esse sapientiæ quod sub tegmine esse nummi;” præstantia autem hæc attinet doctrinæ, quod sapientia possessorem suum per se sustinere possit (*vel* sustinebit). Contemplare opera Dei; 13 quis enim corrigere potest quidquid Ille fecerit perversum? Die prosperitatis sis in bono; et die 14

NOTE. Ver. 11. Some would render **בְּ** in this place, “equally with,” the sense which it has in Eccles. ii. 16, Psalm LXXIII. 25, cvi. 6, Job ix. 26, &c., and translate, “Wisdom is as good as an inheritance, yea, of more value than it.” But Mendelssohn’s rendering connects these verses with the preceding, wherein we are forbidden to complain of the loss of worldly wealth. Solomon says, that in such case we are cast upon wisdom and philosophy for support, and that we shall then find that whereas money without wisdom frequently is most injurious and destructive, wisdom can preserve us alive when we are stripped of this world’s goods.

תִּתְרֹן is a substantive, and is equivalent to **וַיִּתְרֹן**, which is used in place of it in the next verse. It means “superiority,” and here, “superiority of utility,” or “superior utility.”

Ver. 12. The phrase **בָּצֶל הַחֲכָמָה בָּצֶל הַכֹּסֶף** is clearly proverbial, and is expressed with the usual brevity of adages, and would be written in inverted commas if they were used in Hebrew. **לְ** means here, as in chap. vii. 12, “a shelter,” “a protection.” We must understand “**הַנְּאָשֵׁר**” before **בָּצֶל**, “He who is under the shelter of wisdom, is as though he were under the shelter of money,” which, like wisdom, gives a man power and consequently a certain degree of security. See Note to chap. i. 18, for instances of **הַנְּאָשֵׁר** understood.

וַיְתַר לְרֹאֵי הַשְׁמָשׁ : כִּי בֶּצֶל חֲכָמָה בֶּצֶל הַכְּסָף 12
 וַיְתַרּוּ רַעַת חֲכָמָה תְּחִיה בְּעָלִיק : רָאָה אֶת-מְעָשָׂה 13
 הָאֱלֹהִים כִּי מַי יָכַל לַתְּקַנֵּן אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָוֹתָו : בַּיּוֹם 14
 טֻבָּה הָיָה בְּטוּב וַיּוֹם רָעוֹה רָאָה גַּם אֶת-זֶה

Observe that the zakeph (:) is over **רַעַת**, which therefore is not in a state of construction with the next word. **חֲכָמָה** is the nominative to the verb **תְּחִיה**.

Ver. 13. “Do not wish events to roll on at thy own pleasure, but contemplate the appointments of God, checking thy own wishes in submission to His, as though the events did not affect thee or took place in thy sphere, but thou wert only viewing and contemplating them from a distance, ‘for who can make right what He has made perverted?’ He is the uncontrollable agent, and not thou; therefore it is for thy good not to be perversely opposed to His decree, but to regulate thy thoughts and actions according to the will and appointments of the Creator.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. **מְעָשָׂה** may be rendered here “appointments,” a sense in which we meet with it several times in this book. See vii. 17. “So I contemplated the whole of the Divine appointments.” See also iii. 14. “Contemplate,” i. e. without repining, like an uninterested spectator. It is useless to do otherwise, as none can bring to greater perfection what He has apparently left imperfect. This is all in answer to the objections recited above.

We have a parallel passage to the last clause of this verse in i. 15, **מְעָוָת לֹא יָכַל לַתְּקַנֵּן**, “the perverted cannot be set right,” i. e. in the condition of mankind.

לעַמְתִּזָּה עֲשֵׂה הָאֱלֹהִים עַל־דִּבְרֹת שֶׁלְאֵין־מֵצָא
הָאָדָם אַחֲרָיו מָאוֹמָה :

Ver. 14. “‘In the day of prosperity thou mayest continue in “happiness; and in the day of adversity רִאֵה,’ i. e. (as before), “‘contemplate it as from a distance, as if this adversity did not “affect or extend to thee; and seek out the cause which pro-“duces it,’ that is to say, ‘Consider from whom misfortunes “come upon thee. It is God who hath caused prosperity to “be counterbalanced by adversity, and distributed them so as “to correspond to each other, and connected them together, “in order that if man knew and comprehended their connexion “and correlation, he might not find any reflection to make “against God (הָרֹאֵה אַחֲרָיו).’” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. There can be no doubt that we have in the beginning of this verse a fresh instance of paronomasia or alliteration. טוב and טוֹבָה are words of different sense; the first, invariably meaning, “kindness,” or “prosperity,” (the latter is its sense here,) and meaning, “good,” morally, as in the Psalms, “Depart from evil, and do good.” Mendelssohn appears to take היה בְּטוֹב to mean merely, “enjoy that good, i. e. prosperity;” but I much prefer to understand it, “continue in the practice of God’s will, i. e. of good, and do not allow worldly prosperity to pervert thee.” The same alliteration occurs in בַּיּוֹם רַעַת רִאֵה between רַעַת and רִאֵה.

This last phrase has been variously interpreted. We may either with Mendelssohn take רִאֵה as referring to רַעַת understood, and translate it, “In the day of adversity contemplate (that adversity) like an unconcerned spectator without repining;” or we may take רִאֵה absolutely or as referring to the following clause and translate, “In the day of adversity observe! (viz. the fact that) God has established a balance between good and

infortunii contemplare! hoc quoque par illi fecit Deus eo consilio, ne quid adversum Se (i. e. quod Sibi exprobrent) homines invenirent.

evil, &c." Some indeed construe רְאֵה before בַּיּוֹם רָעָה thus, "In the day of prosperity continue in what is good, and keep in view the day of adversity, (i. e. in order that it may not overtake thee unprepared) for God has made such an equal distribution of prosperity and adversity that man cannot know or discover what may next befall him." This is an excellent sense; but the evident similarity of construction of בַּיּוֹם רָעָה, בַּיּוֹם טוֹבָה, "in the day of adversity," and בַּיּוֹם רָעָה, "in the day of prosperity," would thus be neglected.

When דברה does not signify "a saying" or "subject of discourse" as in iii. 18, and viii. 2, it means "a cause" or "a reason," and therefore על־דברת שׁ must be, "in order that."

Mendlessohn agrees with Yarchi in treating לִמְצָא אַחֲר as a phrase to express, "to find matter of reflection upon, i. e. to discover a cause of complaint against," and with this rendering of it the antecedent of the affix of אַחֲר must be האלֹהִים, and the last clause mean, "in order that man might find no cause of complaint against him" (God). If we do not take those words to be a phrase, but אַחֲר to mean simply "after," or "behind," we may either take נָאָדָם as the antecedent of the affix, and translate thus, "in such a way that man cannot find out anything that may be behind him," i. e. "that may be about to befall himself," (as at vi. 12, מִזְמְרָה אַחֲרֶיה) or, making האלֹהִים the antecedent, "in such a way that man cannot make any improvement after Him," i. e. "after what He has done, and the perfect arrangement which He has made." But an objection against both these renderings is that על־דברת שׁ means, "in order that," and not simply "in such a way that;" and that it

SECTIO DECIMA.

*Utraque hæc vidi in diebus vanitatis meis; est 15
justus qui perit in justitiâ suâ, et improbus est*

would not be a suitable answer to the objections against providence in chap. vi. to say that “God has distributed prosperity and adversity equally in the world,” either “in order that he may be perfectly uncertain which of these is next to be his lot,” or “in order that he may not be able to improve his own condition in the world.”

Ver. 15. “The following circumstance and the reverse of “it have I seen during the few days that I am living on the “earth; there is the case of a king righteous in all his ways, “who never wrongs any man and does not molest the nations “surrounding his kingdom, who perishes in his justice and “does not prosper on the throne of his kingdom; and there “is also to be found the wicked man who molests all within “his reach, and nevertheless lives long in his sovereignty in the “midst of his wickedness.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. בְּלָי here signifies “both.” After understand
יְמִינֵי.

Mendlessohn gives רַשֵּׁע here the sense of “molestan,” “a troublesome, restless, man, who annoys others.” Kimchi in his commentary on the Psalms says of this word, כִּי הָעֵנִין הַרְשֵׁע כְּמוֹ “הַוָּא יִשְׁקֹט וְמַיְרַשְׁעַ.” אֶל-הַרְשֵׁע הַרְבָּה. הַוָּא הַחֲרוֹדָה כְּמוֹ “הַוָּא יִשְׁקֹט וְמַיְרַשְׁעַ.” וּבְכָל אֲשֶׁר-יִפְנֶה יִרְשְׁעַ. i. e. “The sense of the word רַשֵּׁע is ‘restlessness,’ as in the passages, Job xxxiv. 29, ‘Let him

THE TENTH SECTION.

את-הפל ראהתי בימי הפל יש צדיק אבד בצרקו 15

make still, and who shall make disturbed ?' 1 Sam. xiv. 47, 'Wherever he turned he caused confusion.' Eccles. vii. 17, 'Be not over restless.' Still more to the purpose is Eccles. viii. 8, וְלֹא יִמְלֹט רַשֵּׁע, "Restlessness will never save (a man from Divine judgments)," and Isaiah lvii. 20, "The restless bad man is like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, &c." In short this word denotes active mischief; not merely negative evil, the absence of good, but that wickedness which is ever plotting, and on the alert. Accordingly I have chosen to render רַשֵּׁע in the present passage by "wily;" (a word which is always used in a bad sense, and answers to the Latin "vafer.") It is here opposed to the appellation below of the good man, צַדִּיק, who is so upright himself, that he does not suspect others of any wrong, and may consequently perish through over simplicity. While the one is irreproachably upright, and supposes all around him to be as virtuous as himself, the other lives in an atmosphere of evil, imagines nothing but evil, and looks on all others as actuated by the same evil motives as himself.

בָּיִמִּי הַפְּלִי is literally "in the days of my vanity," i.e. "in my fleeting and transitory life." He says that all through it he has observed an unavoidable mixture of evil in human affairs, and that if we do not make allowance for it in our dealings with man, the consequence to ourselves may be very dangerous.

16 יִשְׁעֵנָה רַשְׁעַמְאָרִיךְ בְּרוּתָהוּ : אֶל-תַּהֲיוּ צָדִיקְהַרְבֶּה

Ver. 16. “Do not be just to an extreme beyond what is “expedient; for he who is absolutely just,” (and makes no allowance for the existence of wrong and evil in the world) “will not prosper in political administration; and do not affect “excessive penetration, or look upon thyself as wiser than all “that have been before thee; nor seek to manage every thing “according to thy own opinion and forethought; why shouldest “thou bring upon thyself the astonishment and disappointment “of finding that thou hast been labouring to no purpose?” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Rosenmuller agrees with Mendlessohn in considering this advice addressed to a magistrate with regard to his administration of justice. But such a limitation is quite unnecessary. What Solomon is desirous here to inculcate is, that in our dealings with others we should neither be blind to the wrong and evil which prevails in the world, nor, on the other hand, be like the thoroughly bad man, who acts on the principle that every one is bad as himself; in short, neither to be too cunning, wily, and mischievous, nor to be too simple-hearted and good-natured. “Be not too just,” means, “Act not as if there were nothing but justice in the world, or as if this were the only principle to be taken into account in your dealings with others;” i. e. “look not for justice too much.” “Nor affect excessive penetration,” (in Latin, “nimiam solertiam,”) “do not pretend too much to a knowledge of the world, and a keen insight into the sinister motives of others, always giving them credit for the worst, (which is the opposite extreme to that other), since if you do so you will make yourself miserable, and kill yourself with suspicion and vexation.” This interpretation is borne out by the next verse, and also by verse 19, where he says, “Observation

16 qui *vitam suam* producit in nequitiâ suâ. Ne sis nimium justus; neque solertiam nimium præ te

will shew you at once, that there is no good man in the world who never does wrong, and therefore you must not expect it; but at the same time do not keep your ears open to every slanderous report; if you do, you will be sure to hear yourself maligned, and so to be seriously annoyed." I consider the two clauses in this verse as antithetical to each other, and the next verse as merely a repetition of the same idea in different language, whereas Mendlessohn takes the two verses as antithetical to each other. The method I adopt is more simple, and therefore more in accordance with the genius of Hebrew style than that of supposing, as he does, an inverted antithesis between the corresponding parts of the two verses. This may exist indeed according to my rendering, though it is not necessary to the sense. For while I take אֵלֹתָה⁽¹⁾ צַדִּיק to be opposed to אֵלָה⁽²⁾ תְּרַשֵּׁע הַרְבָּה to be opposed to אֵל⁽³⁾, and אֵל⁽⁴⁾ תְּחַפֵּם יוֹתֵר to be opposed to אֵל⁽⁵⁾ סְכָל; since (3) expresses the same idea with modification as (2), and (4) as (1), (3) may be said to be opposed to (1), and (4) to (2). But the existence of this inverted antithesis is not necessary to the sense of my rendering; whereas Mendlessohn's is entirely based upon it.

תְּשַׁׂמְמָה. On this word the Rabbinic commentators make the following remarks. "Either it is from a Hithpohel conjugation, and the dagesh is inserted in the שׁ to compensate for the omission of the נ of the conjugation; (although for sake of euphony this נ does not come before, but after שׁ or ס in verbs beginning with either of those letters when in the Hithpohel, still in order to indicate the omission of it, the dagesh is placed in the שׁ, because the proper grammatical place of it is before that letter), or, which is more probable, it may

feras; cur teipsum enecabis? Ne sis nimium vafer, 17
 neque sis ineptus; cur ante tempus tuum peribis?
 Expedit ut hoc retineas, nec ab illo manum tuam 18
 remittas; nam Dei metuens utraque ista *extrema*

be a verb Niphal from שׂוֹמֵם, a word of the class נָחַי בְּעִינָה "with eyes," (i. e. with a ו for the middle letter, and the last letter doubled, an additional anomaly) a class which is called that of the ‘squared’ conjugation, (because לֶל may be represented by לָל), like כּוֹנֵן תְּכּוֹנֵן." He evidently considers כּוֹנֵן a quadrilateral, and in the Kal conjugation, of which יְבּוֹנֵן would be future Niphal, (not taking it, as the Lexicographers do, to be the Pihel of בּוֹנֵן which they say is the obsolete Kal form of the verb;) and inclines to think there are similar forms, שׂוֹמֵם and יְשּׂוֹמֵם. This is ingenious; but the former derivation is less novel, and perhaps gives a better sense. The Hithpohel of שָׁמַשׁ, ("to lay waste," or "destroy,") almost always means to be "astonished, amazed," vide Is. Lix. 16, LXIII. 5, Ps. cxliii. 4, and so Mendlessohn takes it here; but I prefer to translate, "Why shouldest thou kill thyself ('teipsum eneces') with suspicion?" considering that Solomon is warning against the consequences of "affecting excessive penetration." The fact of תְּחַכֵּם being in the Hithpohel, seems to indicate that תְּשֻׂמֵּם is in a similar conjugation and bears a reflective sense.

נָחַי is, of course, the apocopated form for תְּחַדֵּחַ, like נָחַיְתָּ, like נָחַיְתָּ, which is always used with ו conversive, and with אל.

Ver. 17. "But beware that thou incline not to the other " extreme, that thou be not mischievous to an extreme, or be " foolish so as to believe every lie thy servants tell thee with- " out looking after them, lest they secretly devise a plot against " thee to destroy thee prematurely." Mendlessohn.

וְאֶל-תִּתְחַכֵּם יוֹתֵר לְפָה תְּשׁׂוּםָם : אֶל-תִּרְשַׁע הַרְבָּה 17
 וְאֶל-תִּהְיֵי סְכָל לְפָה תְּמֻות בְּלֹא עַתֶּךָ : טֹוב אֲשֶׁר 18
 תַּאֲנֹנוּ בָּזָה וְגַם-מֹוה אֶל-תִּנְחַדֵּךְ בַּיּוֹרָא אֱלֹהִים

NOTE. As I have already said, I take this verse not as antithetical to the preceding, as Mendlessohn does, but as a repetition of it in stronger words, with a different order of the clauses. “Be not too wily,” corresponds to “affect not excessive penetration,” and “be not too simple” to “look not for justice too much;” and the questions at the ends of the two verses refer respectively only to the last clause of each; so that there is a warning against both extremes. On the one hand, the wily man is warned that he may wear himself out with causeless suspicions, and on the other, the simple-hearted man who supposes every one to be as good and as well-meaning as himself, that he may fall a prey to the designs of the insidious.

The word **תִּרְשַׁע** here is hardly capable of being represented by a single word in English. It represents the spirit of the mischievous and bad man, who in all his plans calculates on the depravity of all he has to deal with, and therefore has recourse to wiles which the simple-hearted is incapable of conceiving, and is ever restless and on the alert in the prosecution of them. As it is a stronger phrase than **וְאֶל-תִּהְיֵי סְכָל**, **תִּתְחַכֵּם** is stronger than “**צְדִיק אֶל-תִּהְיֵי תַּרְבָּה**.”

Ver. 18. “It is expedient for thee to take hold on both ‘of these courses, and to go in the middle path between ‘them; for that is the right way for a man to choose.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Mendlessohn’s explanation of this verse is extremely ingenious. He implies that when Solomon says, “Retain hold

- 19 יִצְא אֶת-כָלָם : הַחֲכָמָה תֹעֵן לְחַכָם מַעֲשֶרֶת
 20 שְׁלִיטִים אֲשֶר הַיּוּ בָּעֵיר : בַּי אָדָם אֵין צְדִיק
 21 בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶר יַעֲשֶה-טֹוב וְלֹא יַחֲטָא : גַם לְבָל-
-

on the one extreme, and let not go the other," he does not mean that a man is to practise either of them in the slightest degree, for that "he who fears God will come out of both of them," but that he is to be like one walking between two fences and taking hold ever and anon of each of them to keep himself in the middle.

חַנְחָה and יַחֲנָה occur several times in this book in the sense "to remit," "to let go," "to relinquish." The Lexicographers probably disliking the anomaly of a verb beginning with a double כ, class these and their cognate forms (as מַחֲנָה) under the verb גַנְחָה, from which they cannot be derived by any regular form. The dagesh of the כ indicates them to be derived from a root גַנְחָה, which is of the class called "חַסְרִי פ", though חַנְחָה still remains an irregular form, for, as the regular Hiphil from גַנְחָה, it should be חַבְנִיחָה.

We find יִצְא, "egredi," used with an accusative in Gen. xliv. 4, xxxiv. 24, Amos iv. 3. כָלָם again means "both of them."

Ver. 19, 20. "He says, 'If a wise man knew every thing done under the government of several rulers who have been in authority in any particular city, this maxim would be confirmed and verified to him, 'that there is no just man in the world who does righteously and never does wrong, and that it is impossible for a ruler to walk in the path of absolute justice to such a degree as to do nothing but right to all who live under his government,' therefore continue in the middle path, and it will be well with thee.'

19 evadet. Præceptum hoc sapientiæ apud sapientem
confirmabitur a decem quibuslibet magnatibus qui
20 urbi præfuerint; quod “nemo in terrâ adeo justus
21 est, ut recte faciat nec unquam peccet.” Ne tamen
ad omnia quæ dicant homines verba mentem tuam

“עֲזָבַת is from the root עָזַב, a word expressing strength and
“might, which is metaphorically applied to the mind, as in the
“phrases שָׁבֵר נֶפֶשׁ, Is. lvi. 11, ‘stout-hearted,’ ‘determined.’
“זָהָר עֲזָבָה, Prov. xviii. 23, ‘answers confidently, boldly.’ It
“is here metaphorically applied to a thing's confirming and
“verifying itself to the mind of a wise man.

“The מִן before שְׁבָרָת is the מִן of place, and not of the
“comparative degree, and expresses that a wise man will learn
“the truth of this maxim from them, from observation upon
“them, and it will confirm itself to him thereby.” Mendles-
sohn.

NOTE. We find in ix. 13, a similar use of חַכְמָה, to denote “a piece of wisdom,” “a wise maxim.”

All the Commentators beside Mendlessohn take the מִן here
to be that of the comparative degree and consequently have not
seen the close connexion of verses (20) and (19), or made sense
of the passage.

“Ten” is used here for any collective number, as we say
“several.”

Solomon is here, as I observed, giving a reason for what
he said above, that a man must not expect perfect justice in the
world or act as if he did; i. e. that in his dealings, especially
in a magisterial capacity he must not look for perfection in
others or affect it in himself; and he now proceeds to state why
we should not on the other hand be too suspicious and open to
slanderous reports.

Ver. 21, 22. “Now since thou hast chosen the middle

applies; quominus audias si tibi servus tuus obloquatur; quum tute tibi conscient sis te quoque 22 sæpenumero aliis oblocutum esse. Cunctam hanc 23 rem tentavi sapientiâ (*sive philosophice*); dicebam, “Intelligam;” sed ea procul a me remota erat. Pro- 24 cul remotum est quod *olim* fuit; et *arcanorum*

“course, i. e. to take hold on the two extremes and so keep between them, thou oughtest not to pay attention to every thing that others say of thy government and the administration of thy kingdom, nor care for what people talk in their usual way of finding fault with every thing that is done without their personal co-operation in it; and if thy servant speak disparagingly of thee and blame thy conduct, shut thy ears from hearing him do so, for oftentimes thou too hast spoken lightly of others and blamed their conduct, and sometimes when they were more in the right than thou; therefore thou must not care about what they complainingly say, or about vain reports which have nothing substantial in them, nor depart from the right way which thou hast chosen.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. Ver. 21. גַם means in ver. 21, “yet,” “still,” “nevertheless,” in which sense we find it also in iv. 16 and viii. 12 of this book, and again in Ps. cxxix. 2, “Yet they have not prevailed against me,” and Ezek. xvi. 30, “Yet thou wast not satisfied with this.” Ver. 22. The קְרִי on נָתַת is אֱתָה.

Solomon says, “While you must not imagine all the world to be just and upright, at the same time you must not be attentive to the murmurs and slanderous reports that may be abroad; and if your servant speak disparagingly of you, you must be as though you heard it not, knowing that such things are often said thoughtlessly, and recollecting your own failings in this respect.” What is to be avoided by means of this

הַרְכָּבִים אֲשֶׁר יֹדְבֵרוּ אֶל-תְּפִתְחָן לְפָנָךְ אֲשֶׁר לְאַתְּ שָׁמָע
אֶת-עֲבֹתְךָ מִקְלָלֶךָ : בַּי גַּם-פְּעֻמִּים רַבּוֹת יָגַע לְפָנָךְ 22
אֲשֶׁר גַּם-אָתָּה קְלָלָת אֶחָרִים : בְּלִזְהָ נְפִיתִי בְּחִכְמָה 23
אָמַרְתִּי אֲחִיכָּמָה וְהִיא רְחוֹקָה מִמֶּנִּי : רְחוֹק מֵה- 24

determined inattention to the slanders of murmurers which he recommends, is not the being found fault with by one's servant, but the listening to it and being annoyed thereby, if he speak disparagingly. As Luther says at this place, "He who from suspicion wants to hear all that people say about him will sometimes hear things he would rather not have heard."

Ver. 23. "All this that I examined philosophically was "but a very small part of the wisdom emphatically called so, " viz. the supreme wisdom in the government of creation; but "when I said to myself, I shall understand it and attain to the "perfect comprehension of it, I still found that it was far off "from me." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. נְסָה means here "to test;" vid. ii. 1. בְּלִזְהָ is for בְּלִזְהָתָה. "All this matter," "this unavoidable mixture of evil in the world," I tested by the rules of philosophy, and thought for a time that I should be able to explain it; but I approached no nearer by all my researches to the true and thorough explanation of the thing. It still continued beyond my reach.

הִיא refers not to חִכְמָה, as Rosenmuller takes it, but to the same antecedent as הָזֶה which is also in the feminine gender, viz. "this phenomenon in the moral condition of mankind."

אָמַרְתִּי אֲנִי בְּלִזְהָ is here put for אָמַרְתִּי אֲנִי בְּלִזְהָ in chap. iii.

Ver. 24. "What has been is very remote, i. e. what took place in the beginning of this created world when man was yet in the supreme degree of felicity before the fall; all that

25 שְׁחִיאָה וּעַמֶּק וּעַמֶּק מֵי יְמָצָאנוּ: סְבּוֹתִי אָנִי וְלֹבִי
 לְרֹעַת וְלְתֹור וּבְקַשׁ חֲכָמָה וְחַשְׁבּוֹן וְלְלֹעַת גְּשֻׁעָה
 26 פְּסָל וְהַסְּכָלוֹת הַוְּלִילוֹת: וּמוֹצָא אָנִי מִרְמָה מִתְּמָה אֶת-
 הָאָשָׁה אֲשֶׁר-הִיא מִצּוּרִים וְתַרְמִים לְבַה אַסְוּרִים

"is remote from man at present, and an exceedingly deep subject, so that it is difficult to comprehend it in its true aspect by any effort of the understanding; for man as he is at present is very far from that state of perfection. עַמֶּק is applied to anything which man cannot attain to without difficulty and danger, and is here metaphorically applied to the contemplation of an obscure and difficult subject." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. He tried to account for the necessity of recognizing the existence of evil in dealings with our fellow-men, which he who carries justice to excess neglects to do, or, in other words, he endeavoured to ascertain the origin of evil, but found the discovery of its primary cause too deep for him on account of the extreme remoteness of the past.

Ver. 25. "And so I turned myself to examine the wisdom of the Divine administration, and the relation and proportion of natural evils to their causes and origins, and to understand how wickedness comes from folly and madness from ignorance; for that since no evil comes from God, of necessity evil must have arisen by reason of defect, and consequently ignorance must be the cause of sin in man, and it must be in consequence of his lack of knowledge that he acts madly and wickedly. (For ignorance is not sin in itself, but the fount and origin of sin, and he therefore sought to discover how folly turns into wickedness, and ignorance into madness.) חַשְׁבּוֹן is 'a theory

25 profundissimum; quis id comperiet? *Itaque* convertebam me ipsum, et *sese* mens mea *convertebat*, ad cognoscendam, et ad explorandam, quærendamque rationem philosophicam et explicationem, scilicet ad intelligendum quomodo fit improbitas ex ignorantia,
 26 et e stultitia dementia. Et feminam comperibam malignorem esse letho causam; quippe quæ quoad

"to account for the connexion between cause and effect." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Literally, "I and my mind turned," the verb agreeing with the first person as more worthy.

Finding himself unable to discover the primary cause of the existence of evil, he tried the hypothesis that (since all evil must arise from defect,) evil originates in ignorance and folly; and on this hypothesis, as he tells us in the next verse, he traced evil to carnal lust as a secondary cause, led away by which the natural man distinguishes not between real good and apparent or present good, and so falls into sin.

Better than Mendlessohn's interpretation of חכמָה as "the Divine wisdom," is to take it as expressing somewhat the same idea as חַשְׁבּוֹן, viz. "a wise, philosophic explanation."

We have here חַזְלָות used in the sense of wickedness, because sin is the highest degree of infatuation. It means "moral obliquity," "perversion of the moral sense," as sometimes it does that of the intellect. So it is unquestionably used in ix. 3, where it is employed as synonymous with עַגְלָה. Similarly גַּבֵּל means both "foolish" and "wicked."

Ver. 26. "הַנָּשָׁה, ('woman' in the abstract), is here used as an epithet of carnal lust and desire. This is the occasion of both those evils to us; out of it arises our wickedness and infatuation, for it seduces the eyes of men, and perverts

mentem ejus ceu retia sit et laquei, et cujus manus
vincula sint; servatur ex eâ qui Deo acceptus sit,
peccator autem ab eâ illaqueatur. En! hanc ratio- 27
nem comperi; indicavit eam *mihi* collectio; res

“their thoughts; and it is as a net and a gin to entrap souls
“and to make them fall into a snare, so as never to rise up
“again; and its hands are like iron fetters to bind him who is
“decoyed by it. And after calling it nets and gins, he goes on
“to say that it is ‘a net for every sinner;’ and this conveys a
“conclusive answer to the question mentioned above; for when
“lust supervenes upon ignorance the result is necessarily wicked-
“ness and madness; since if man knows not how to distinguish
“real good from apparent, and to make his choice accordingly,
“and lust, as is always the case where it exists, be ever busy
“and restless in him, it is impossible for man not to be brought
“into sin by lust; and it will be just as if ignorance were con-
“nected with carnal desire, and thus engendered wickedness and
“madness.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. It must be recollect ed in reading the English translation, that what Solomon means in this place by “woman,” is carnal lust which he has personified in this way; but consistently with the method of literal translation which I have elsewhere adopted, no other rendering of אָשָׁה could be given.

אָשָׁה in the participle expresses that this was the result he had come to, and which he still held to be the true one, as we should say, “I find.”

Observe that מְרַת does not agree with אָשָׁה; I therefore understand with מְרַת the word “cause,” and translate it, “a bitter occasion of evil.” If it agreed with אָשָׁה, we should have had מְרַת; nor would the רִבִּיעִי have been over.

אֲשֶׁר means here, “inasmuch as,” Latine, “quippe.” לְבָה

יבָּרִיחַ טֹב לְפָנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים יָמַלְתָּ מִפְנָה וְחוֹטָא יָלַכְרַ
בָּה : רָאֶה וְהַמְּצָאתִי אָמַרְתָּ קְהֻלָּת אֲחָת לְאֲחָת 27

is placed absolutely, as in Ps. lxxxiii. 6, “*נוֹעַצָּו לְבָב חִזְקָיו*,” “They have consulted together (as to, i. e. in) their heart;” and iii. 8, “*הִכִּית אַת-כְּלָאַבְנִי לְחִזְקָיו*,” “Thou hast smitten all my enemies (as to) the check-bone;” where see Kimchi. The same is probably the construction of *קְהֻלָּת*. If so, the translation is this, “Since she is nets and snares as to her heart, and bonds as to her hands.”

Ver. 27. “‘If you lay one consideration by the side of “another, and search out by the exercise of the understanding “the relation of each to each, you will find the above to be “a theory connecting folly and ignorance with wickedness and “madness.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. He had started with the hypothesis that wickedness must proceed from ignorance because it must arise from defect; and next came the question how wickedness proceeds from ignorance. To explain this he had amassed a large collection (*קְהֻלָּת*) of facts, laying one by the side of another (*אֲחָת לְאֲחָת*), and contemplating their relative bearings; and by this colligation of facts, had at last been led to the theory stated in the preceding verse that carnal lust is the connecting link between ignorance and sin. *קְהֻלָּת* is here (and here only) used as a feminine, and must therefore in this place be an abstract noun, and mean “compilation,” or “collection.” The expression *אֲחָת לְאֲחָת לְמִצְא חִשְׁבָּנוּ* is inserted merely to explain the word *קְהֻלָּת*, and to inform us why he adopted the method of “compilation” in order to arrive at a theory of connexion between ignorance and sin. *אֲחָת לְאֲחָת* is clearly a proverbial form of expression; a phrase; like “*לְקֹן לְקֹן*” in Isaiah, “line (must

לְמֵצָא חִשְׁבּוֹן : אֲשֶׁר עֹזֶר בְּקַשָּׁה נֶפֶשִׁי וְלֹא מֵצָאתִי
אֶרְם אֶחָד מְאֻלָּת מֵצָאתִי וְאֵשָׁה בְּכָל-אֱלֹהָה לֹא

be added or laid) upon line, &c." i. e. for instruction to be successful. So here he says, "One fact," or "argument must be laid to another," i. e. a colligation of facts and observations must be made, in order for a true theory to be arrived at; or he may be stating that such was the method he pursued in order to arrive at this particular theory. Thus אָמַרְתִּי קָהָלָת means, "a compilation told it me," i. e. the method of colligation of reasons led me to this result, and the latter clause either "one fact was added to another to find out the theory," or, "fact must be added to fact to find out a theory." The last is most in accordance with the evidently proverbial character of the expression. It is remarkable that Solomon should have thus incidentally described a method of research so closely analogous to that of Induction, as that which he himself adopted in moral philosophy.

Ver. 28. "There can be no doubt that when king Solomon "perceived that his wives turned away his heart from after his "God, his spirit was broken within him, and he repented of "his past life, and that it was in the bitterness of his soul "that, after speaking severely of women, and laying on them "the blame of his sin which he had sinned in transgressing the "commandments of his God, and calling sensual lust by the "name 'woman,' and declaring it to be more malignant than "death, he now says besides that a good man may be found "in a thousand, but that a good woman cannot be found in "that number. Now this was the number of his wives, viz. a "thousand, 'for he had seven hundred wives, (queens, or princes) "and three hundred concubines (of lower degree,) and one "virtuous woman he had not found among them all. But an

enim rei apponenda est ad explicationem invenien-
28 dam. Quoniam usque toto animo quæsivi nec tamen
inveni; e mille viris unum inveni, unam vero inter

"intelligent man must feel sure that the king exceeded due
"bounds, and that if he had taken to himself only one wife, or
"a few, agreeably to the commands of his God, he might pos-
"sibly have found among them a help meet for him, as many
"have found who have not attained to the eminence of this
"wise man; for there are good and bad among women as
"well as among men. But since Solomon overstepped the
"bounds of moderation and went to excess and took to him-
"self a thousand wives, whereas God commands a king not to
"multiply wives to himself, it is not to be wondered at that he
"did not meet with help or love among them, or that attach-
"ment and conjugal affection which properly belongs to a single
"man who marries a single woman. And though that plurality
"be not forbidden to a private person, still in respect of moral
"discipline and propagation of offspring it is certainly advisable
"for a man not to have more than one wife." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. This verse is a record of his observation on the depravity of women, which was one of the circumstances which had led him to the above conclusion. Mendlessohn in commenting on it speaks too lightly of the words of the inspired writer, who at least was prevented by the superintendance of the Holy Spirit from asserting what was false. It is just possible, as he says, that Solomon may be alluding to the number of his own wives; but the idea is somewhat fanciful.

There can be no doubt that נִשְׁאָן in this verse means, "because," or "since," as it does in verse 26 supra, Gen. xxxiv. 27, 1 Kings xv. 5, &c., and because בַּקְשָׁה is in the Pihel and therefore transitive, we must translate, "Since I have long sought for a certain thing, but have never found it," and in the next

cunctas totidem mulieres non inveni. Præterquam, 29
 en! hanc causam reperi, nempe quod probos fecerat
 homines Deus, illi autem multas machinationes ex- CAP.
 cogitaverunt. Quis erit sicut sapiens? et quis *hujus* 1 VIII.

clause he explains that this was “one virtuous woman among a thousand.” The phrase “my mind has sought,” is equivalent to “I have sought earnestly.” If אָשֵׁר were governed by בְּקַשְׁתָּה, and the sense, “that which I have sought,” we should have had אָתֶת־אָשֵׁר or at least הָאָשֵׁר, and the ה before לֹא מִצְאָתִי would be superfluous, since the conductive ה is unnecessary in so short a sentence. עד is used here in the same sense (of “usque,” “incessantly,”) as in Ruth i. 14, “And he wept on his neck תְּיוּ ‘a long time,’ ‘unceasingly’;” Ps. lxxxiv. 5, “They will continually praise thee;” and Jer. ii. 9.

Ver. 29. “Besides that which I have mentioned I have discovered this origin of evil in the world, that God made man at first upon the earth upright, (for all the powers and faculties implanted in the heart of man were given him by the Lord of goodness for a good and right purpose, and so man was upright before his fall as to all the faculties of his soul, walking in his integrity); but that they, i. e. Adam and Eve and their children after them have devised many inventions and ideas by means of which they have perverted that rectitude, and embittered that sweetness. For the state of the world was not always as it is now; but all the works and successful manufactures, and all the designs and performances of art which we see in our time and fancy that they are necessary to the subsistence of the human race, these, I say, never existed till after the sons of men had deserted the right way for which they were created and sought them out crooked paths. From these devices proceed each man’s envy and jealousy of his neighbour, and covetousness of wealth and rank, which are the

מִצְאָתִי : לִבֶּד רַאֲהִזָּה מִצְאָתִי אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הָאֱלֹהִים 29
 CHAP. VIII.
 אֶת־הָאָרֶם יִשְׁר וְהַפֵּה בְקָשׁו חִשְׁבּוֹנֹת רְבִים : מִי 1

" occasion of evil and the origin of many sins in the world. " But if man had continued in the condition in which he was " created, he would have been saved from all these dangers; " for he would have felt no jealousy or anger or covetousness " or desire of greatness; for all these are the consequences of " the devices which the sons of men have invented." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. After לִבֶּד understand לִבֶּדֶם ; for מִאֲשֶׁר is " beside," and this אֲשֶׁר is omitted on account of the next one.

הַזָּהָר, both here and in the 27th verse, is nothing more than a demonstrative pronoun answering to " hicce" in Latin, "*οὐτοσι*" in Greek, and "*ecce*" in French, and may be represented by the English vulgarism, "this here." And the literal order and rendering will be, " Beside that (לִבֶּד מִאֲשֶׁר) I discovered this (additional reason) (מִצְאָתִי רַאֲהִזָּה)." The principal secondary cause of evil which he discovered was carnal lust; but besides this he observed the progress of human art and invention (which did not make its appearance till after the fall, vide Gen. iv.) to be a fruitful source of evil.

חִשְׁבּוֹנֹת is masculine, but has a feminine termination in the plural, like אָבָם, מְקוּם, אָבָן, &c.

Ver. 1. " 'He who should be like the truly wise man, " i. e. one acquainted with the supreme and real wisdom, viz. " the providence of God and its exalted and mysterious ways, " and like him understand the interpretation of this difficulty " so as to be able to explain it in all its details, what is the " origin of evil in the world, and what will be the end of it,

**בכהחֶלְם ומי יודע פָשֵר גָבר חַכְמַת אָדָם תָאִיר
פָנָיו וען פָנָיו יִשְׁנָא :**

"and how God changes it into what is 'good and excellent
"in its own season,' (for in what he has said above he has
"approached this subject only by very indirect methods, and
"merely stated that evil has been introduced among men
"through means of ignorance and carnal lust, and that the
"state of the world was different at first, and the like, but has
"acknowledged that with respect to the details of this subject,
"the investigation of it was beyond his powers,) 'whoever,'
"he declares, 'should be like that truly wise man, it is certain
"that the Divine wisdom which he would possess would dispel
"from his mind all repining and sadness, (for such a wise man
"will rejoice in every thing that takes place under the sun, since
"he understands and has attained to the explanation why God
"has decreed respecting it that it should be, and how it must be
"for a purpose good and pleasing to God); so that this wisdom
"would enlighten his countenance, and the cheerfulness and
"confidence of his looks would be twice that of the looks of
"other men. He would never feel peevishness or vexation;
"never be astonished or provoked to madness at events which
"happen; but his looks would always be bright, and his heart
"cheerful about all the appointments of God from small to
"great." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. **חָכָם** is used *κατ' εξοχην*, and means "the truly wise man." **פָּשַׁר** is connected with the Chaldee **פְּשָׁר**, which means the same as the Hebrew **פִּתְרָה**, "interpretatus est," in Gen. xl. 8. **חָאֵר פְנִים** means, "to make the face cheerful and serene," like **חָאֵר עַיִלִים** in Ps. xix. 9, and Ezra ix. 8; compare 1 Sam. xiv. 29.

Mendelssohn has given us the true clue to the meaning of

rei interpretationem intelligens? Illius viri sapientia vultum ejus illustrabit, et faciei ejus fiducia duplificabitur.

this verse by shewing its connexion with the preceding instead of the following passage. He translates it, “He who should be like the truly wise man, and he who should understand the explanation of this subject, the wisdom of that man would enlighten his countenance, and the cheerfulness (or ‘confidence’) of his looks would be doubled.” According to this rendering, **דָבָר** has here the same sense as in xii. 13, **סֹוףּ דָבָר הַכְלֵל**, “the conclusion of this whole subject;” (whereas if the verse be disjoined from the preceding passage the meaning of **דָבָר** is perfectly vague and indefinite), and **אֲגַנְשִׁי**, the Puhal of **שְׁנָה**, means either “is repeated,” i. e. “doubled,” or “is changed,” i. e. “renewed,” like **אָלַמְתִּי בְּךָ** in Is. xl. 31, **תַּחֲלִיףִי בְּךָ**, “they shall change,” i. e. “renew their strength,” so that **עַזְיָה** being rendered “confidence,” the two last clauses of the verse are quite consistent in sense.

Those who connect this verse with the following passage translate it thus, “Who can be compared with the really wise man? and who with one that understands the true explanation of any matter? (**כִּי** being supplied before **יִרְאָה** from **כִּרְאָה**). A man’s wisdom, (or ‘the wisdom of such an one,’) enlightens his countenance, and the arrogance of his looks is removed.” They render **אֲגַנְשִׁי** “is changed (into humility),” i. e. “is removed;” which is very forced; and assert that **עַזְיָה** is always used in a bad sense, for “arrogant,” as in Dan. viii. 23, and Deut. xxviii. 50; but in these places it may simply mean, “bold,” “resolute;” and allowing that **עַזְיָה** is sometimes used in a bad sense, as in Gen. xl ix. 7, **עַזְיָה** has always a good sense, and means nothing but “robur,” i. e. here “confidence.” This rendering of the verse in fact is an attempt to establish a

SECTIO UNDECIMA.

Ego moneo ut tu regis jussa observes, et auc- 2
toritate præditus verba Divini jurisjurandi observe*t*.

connexion of sense between this verse and those which follow by making it mean that superior sagacity will always remove arrogance, and so promote submission to regal authority. Whether this however is necessarily the effect of superior sagacity is at least questionable, and the translation therefore improbable.

Ver. 2. "He speaks here of the relative duties of a king and his people, and discusses in what way they may best attain to political prosperity. He says, I warn and command every individual of the people to observe the king's word; for he is in authority among the people to do according to his will, and I advise the *ḥy*, the governour who is set over, to observe the subject-matter of the oath of God; i. e. either that obligation, or oath as it may be called, which he constantly lies under to him who setteth up kings to consult the good of his servants and his people, or that oath which he took at the beginning of his reign not to transgress the laws and statutes of the state. At all events there is no one to whom a king is accountable except the Judge of all the earth who tries the reins and heart; and this is an important rule in politics, that the people should not have power put into their hands to judge the king's conduct whether it be good or bad. For the king properly judges the people, not the people

THE ELEVENTH SECTION.

אָנָּי פִּי־מֶלֶךְ שָׁמֵר וַעֲלֵךְ דְּבָרַת שְׁבּוּעַת אֱלֹהִים:

“the king; otherwise the land will never have rest from rebellions against the king and his administration.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. After understand the word **אָנָּי**, or **מִצְאֵק**, or **מִזְאֵךְ**, or rather **אָמֵר**, of which there is an ellipsis in Is. v. 9, **בְּאָנָּי יְהֹוָה צְבָאוֹת**. Or possibly **אָנָּי** may be put here absolutely in the sense, “quod ad me attinet.” “As for me, keep the king’s (my) word.” So in Is. lix. 21, “**אָנָּי וּבוּ**,” “As for me, this is my covenant with them, &c.” Eccles. ii. 15, “As for myself also, it may happen to me.” See also Gen. ix. 9, Exod. xiv. 17, Dan. x. 17. **פֶּה** is used here for the words which proceed out of the mouth. So in Exod. xvii. 1, “They walked according to the mouth of the Lord,” **עַל פִּי יְהֹוָה**.

עַל is separated from **דְּבָרַת** by the accent **זָקֵף** גָּדוֹל, and therefore the two words cannot be equivalent to **עַל־דְּבָר** as most commentators have supposed; but **עַל** must be used as a noun of quality here and be equivalent to **מַזְשִׁיל**, as elsewhere we find it used; thus Hos. vii. 16, xi. 7, **יִשְׁׁוּבָה לֹא עַל**; **אֵל־עַל יְקֻרָּאָה**; 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, **וְנוֹאָם הַגְּבָרָה קָם עַל**.

According to Mendelssohn’s ingenious rendering, **דְּבָרַת** must mean “subject-matter,” “the contents,” or as the Latins say, “verba jurisjurandi,” “vel sacramenti.”

3 אל-תְּבַהֵּל מִפְנָיו תַּלְךְ אֶל-תְּעַמֵּד בְּרוּבָר רֹעֵבִי בָּלְ—
 4 אֲשֶׁר יְחִפְזָן יַעֲשֵׂה : בְּאַשְׁר-דְּבָר-מֶלֶךְ שְׁלֹטֹון וּמִ—
 5 יָמְרָלוּ מַה-תְּعַשָּׂה : שׁוֹמֵר מִצְחָה לֹא יְרֻעֵב כָּבָר

Ver. 3. “Thou must not be in haste to go out of his presence, that is, to leave him directly he does anything that ‘displeases thee; and be not a party to the counsels of rebels, ‘in whom is ‘framed’ an evil design against the king; (Mendelsohn here uses the word **צָוֵק** in allusion to Psalm xli. 9, ‘דְּבָר בְּלָעֵל צָוֵק בָּז’, ‘an evil design is molten (or “cast”) in him,’ a metaphor from the fusion and casting of metals) “for ‘he can do to thee according to his pleasure, since he is the ‘ruler among his people. He has the supreme power and ‘authority, and there is none but God above him.” Mendelsohn.

NOTE. תְּבַהֵּל תַּלְךְ. Here we have two consecutive verbs unconnected by a conjunction like **וּבְعֵץ** afterwards. The first must therefore be taken adverbially; “do not go out precipitately, without proper respect.” (Such going out would in fact be an announcement of open rebellion, and be the first step to being engaged in a conspiracy.) Thus we have 1 Sam. ii. 3, “אַל תְּרַבֵּי תְּנַבְּרוּ,” “do not speak much.” Job xix. 3, “לֹא תַּבְשִׁו תְּהַפְּרוּ לִי,” “Ye do not make yourselves strange to me in a shame-faced way,” i. e. “as if ye were ashamed to do so.”

We find the verb **עָמַד** used in the same sense as here in the first Psalm, “hath not stood in the way of sinners,” i. e. “persisted in it,” or “been engaged in it.”

Ver. 4. “Wherever the word and law of the king extend, “there they are authoritative as a fixed decree upon the sons

3 E conspectu ejus ne præproperè exeas; ne in malâ
 4 re persistas; nam quidquid ei libet facit; quoniam
 regis verbum est potens; et quis ei dicet, “Quid
 5 facis?” Qui præceptum *Dei* observat, quasi ne-
 scibit si verbum *regis* malum sit; sed judicii tem-

“of men, and who shall stay his hand, or say to him, ‘What
 “doest thou?’ To no man does the right belong of summon-
 “ing the king to account, or of questioning him as to the reasons
 “of his conduct.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Here again we have אָשֵׁר in the sense of “in-
 asmuch as.”

Ver. 5. “He who keeps the commandments of his God
 “will not perceive that the word (of the king) is wrong; i. e.
 “he will obey it as if he did not perceive that it was wrong,
 “and will not be a party to the counsels of rebels, even though
 “iniquity be in the breast of the sovereign. And if the king
 “do wrong, he will submit and not rebel against his commands,
 “but put his trust in his God, because it is he who setteth up
 “and removeth kings; and the wise man knows in his own
 “mind that there is a fixed time of account for every business,
 “and a judgment for every work; and if the king have not
 “done right among his people, he will patiently trust in the
 “Lord and wait his time, as king David said, ‘Who shall put
 “forth his hand against the Lord’s anointed and be guiltless?’
 “‘But the Lord may smite him (*with plague*); or his day may
 “come that he shall die; or he may descend into battle and
 “perish.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. “He who does right will not know,” i. e. he will
 act as though he did not know that the “word,” i. e. “the
 king’s word (spoken of in the last verse) is wrong.” “At the
 same time that he submits quietly as if he did not perceive
 the wrong of the command, he knows in his own mind that all

pus fore novit mens sapientis. Cuique enim ne- 6
gotio est tempus suum judicii, malum enim homi-
num multiplex iis incumbit: ignorat enim quisque 7
quid *sibi* futurum sit; quomodo enim futurum
sit quis ei indicabit? (*sive* quis est qui indicet
ei?) Nemo auctoritatem habet in ventum, ad ven- 8
tum cohibendum; nec est *alicui* auctoritas in diem
mortis, nec est certa in bello salus (*sive* dimissio)

will hereafter be set right and that even the king will be rewarded according to his deeds, and that he may be brought to his account none can tell how soon by one of the many evils and calamities of mankind."

מִצְרָיִם is used abstractedly *κατ' εξοχην*. **מֵץ** means here, "a time of account," a doom, as it did in Chap. iii. 17, "for there is a doom for every business and every action there."

Ver. 6, 7. "Behold, many are the plagues incident to the "sons of men, and the king may not escape all of them, for no "one knows what is going to happen, and consequently he "cannot be on his guard against whatever is about to befall "him; and his calamity may come upon him suddenly and in "an instant, so that it would have been impossible for any "one with whom he consulted for his own safety to forewarn "him of it." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Ver. 6. **רַב** almost always denotes multiplicity of number, as I have already observed. In several passages above it signified "prevalence" of evil, i. e. the multitude of the cases of it; here the context seems to shew that it rather means the "variety of the species and multiplicity of the forms of calamity incident to man, any one of which may overtake the king."

Ver. 7. The antecedent of the pronominal affix of **אֵין**

רַע וְעֵת וּמִשְׁפָט יְדֻע לְבַחֲם : בַּי לְכָל-חֶפֶץ יָשָׁן
 עֵת וּמִשְׁפָט כִּירְעַת הָאָדָם רֶבֶת עַלְיוֹ : בַּי-אִינְגָנוֹן
 יְדֻע מִה-שִׁיחָה בַּי בָּאָשָׁר יְהִי מִי יָגִיד לוֹ : אַיִן
 אָדָם שָׁלִיט בְּרוּחַ לְבָלוֹא אֶת-הָרֹוח וְאַיִן שָׁלְטוֹן
 בְּיֹום הַפּוֹתָה וְאַיִן מְשֻלָּחת בְּמִלחָמָה וְלֹא-יִמְלֹט בְּשֻׁעַ

is necessarily **הָאָדָם**, “mankind,” in ver. (6), so that this verse (7) is not spoken exclusively of a king, as Mendlessohn seems to suppose, but is a general remark illustrative of the variety and multifariousness of human calamity. He says this is so great, that man knows not which of all these evils may befall him, for who is there to tell him how the future will be? The particular application of this remark in the present passage relates indeed to the king, but the primary meaning of it is quite general.

Ver. 8. “He mentions here the three causes of death “which king David enumerates in the verse I have quoted. “He says, ‘There is no one who has power over the wind to “restrain it from hurting him.’ This corresponds to ‘Either “the Lord may smite him (with plague);’ for those who die “of plague die by the wind which carries a pestilential vapour “from place to place; and this vapour is subtle and not per-“ceptible to the senses; and all the might of the king “and his princes and his servants cannot prevent such wind “from entering the king’s bed-chamber and destroying him. “‘And there is no exercising authority over the day of death.’ “This corresponds to ‘or his day may come that he shall die;’ “for when the king’s time of natural death arrives, all the “glory of his kingdom will not save him. ‘And there is no

9 אַת-בָּעֵלִיו : אַת-כָּל-זֶה רְאִיתִי וַנְתַּן אַת-לְבִי לְכָל-
מַעֲשָׂה אֲשֶׁר גָּעָשָׂה תְּחִתָּה הַשְׁמָשׁ עַת אֲשֶׁר שְׁלָטָ
10 הָאָרֶם בְּאָרֶם לְבֻעַ לֹו : וּבְלֹן רְאִיתִי רְשָׁעִים

“(certain) rescue in war,” corresponds to ‘or he may descend “into battle and perish;’ i. e. in war there is no place of confidence or refuge for the king to save himself in; for ‘restlessness will never save him,’ i. e. restlessness will never pre-serve him from any of these evils.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **רְשָׁעָה** means restless anxiety, or that wily disposition which is ever fertile in schemes and resources, a sense in which we have already met with it. **בָּעֵלָה** means the “subject” of this temper or disposition; literally, “its owner.”

Ver. 9. “I have noticed all this, that an unrighteous go-“vernment will not last for ever, but only for a limited time, “and after that will be done away. For it is neither in accord-“ance with the experience of history nor with reason that the “many should bow submissively to an individual and hearken “to the voice of his words not for their own happiness but their “injury. Such a thing cannot last for ever.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **אַת-כָּל-זֶה רְאִיתִי** refers to the observation he has just been mentioning on the calamities incident to man, any one of which may overtake the unjust prince; “All this,” he says, “I observed,” or “contemplated.”

The **לֹ** before the infinitive **נַתַּן** is conductive, and signifies “so as,” and the meaning of **וַנְתַּן אַת-לְבִי וּבוּ** is “so as (to be able) to apply my mind to any case that occurs, &c.” i. e. “so as (to be able) to give it a fair consideration.” We find **לֹ** prefixed to an infinitive in a similar sense at ix. 11, **שָׁבַתִּי וּרְאָה**, “I returned,” i. e. “I recalled myself so as to observe,

9 nec dominum suum eripiet improbitas. Hæc omnia contemplatus sum, quo mentem meam *rectius* ad omnia applicarem quæ sub sole facta sint quando
10 alias in alium in ejus damnum dominatus sit. At reverâ quidem exequiis vidi improbos celebrari,

&c.;” and sometimes when the infinitive has the **ל** of the “**בכלם**” prefixed to it to distinguish it from an imperative or a noun substantive (vid. vii. 25, where תְּבוֹר and רָעַת have this prefix, but בְּקַשׁ has not), as in ix. 1, לְבָד אֶת־כָּל־זֶה, “so as to explain all this, &c.” and vii. 25, “לְהַלְּעָת וּבָוֵן,” “so as to understand how wickedness, &c.” in all which passages must be rendered “so as,” and not “in order,” because it implies that the effect expressed by the verb to which it is prefixed was actually produced.

The literal rendering of the last clause is, “Whatever has happened under the sun, when one man has ruled over another to the injury of the latter.” עַת אֲשֶׁר is “when,” and טָלַשׁ an aorist. He now proceeds to say that nevertheless instances are to be found when wickedness prospers and virtue suffers and when what we should have expected from the above observations on human calamities does not take place, and they do not light on the head of the unjust ruler, and that the fact of such instances existing encourages the thoughtless in rebellion against God. He therefore sets himself to explain this paradox.

NOTE. Ver. 10. Mendelssohn says he found this verse extremely difficult. He certainly has mistaken the sense of קְבָרִים in taking it as a metaphor. He says, “‘But in fact I have seen bad men whose name has now almost perished, who are now buried as it were in oblivion, who went on prospering in their wickedness and came forth in the pride of their heart from the

qui e sancti loco exibant eodemque redibant, dum
oblivioni in urbe traduntur qui recte fecerunt; et

place of the holy man, i. e. the regal throne, while those men who did right were forgotten in the same city, and were not remembered even in the place which was the scene of their good deeds.' And he concludes by saying that this too was unsatisfactory."

בְּכֵן, "in truth," "in fact." Such is the meaning of כֵּן in Ps. cxxvii. 2, "Truly it is to his beloved ones that he gives sleep," or, (if it have the same sense there as in the phrase כֵּן עֲשָׂה below), "Well doth he give sleep to his beloved ones."

It is surely far better to render קִבְרִים "honourably buried," agreeably with the sense of קִבְרָה in vi. 3, where it can mean nothing but "honourable burial," than to adopt Mendelssohn's forced explanation. Construe "I have seen bad men buried in state, and that they used to come, &c." The נ before בָּאוּ is not conversive because there is no preceding future verb. Mendelssohn renders בָּוֹא in the same sense here in which הַלְּךָ is frequently used, viz. to express the continuousness of an action, as תִּלְךָ הַלְּךָ וַקְשָׁה, "went on continually and prevailed," i. e. prevailed more and more, Judg. iv. 24, וַיָּלַךְ הַלְּךָ וַיָּגַד, "And he waxed greater and greater," Gen. xxvi. 13, and translates the passage, "They went on prospering and parading in regal splendour." "I have seen the dead who are now buried in oblivion, that they used to go on proceeding in state (incendentes) from the place properly belonging to the holy man." But בָּוֹא (which almost always means "to come," in opposition to הַלְּךָ, "to go,") seems to have been used in this way not by biblical but only by rabbinical writers; and with בָּוֹא הַלְּךָ is used here just as we find it with נָצַר elsewhere, in the sense "to

קְבָּרִים וְבָאֹו וּמִמְקֻומָּם קָדוֹשׁ יַהֲלֹכְוּ וַיַּשְׁתַּבְּחֵוּ בָּעֵיר

come in and go out," to express the daily habit of frequenting as a place of residence; (just as a king would be said in Hebrew to go out and come in before the people in that capacity, i. e. to exercise the functions of, and fill the dignities of a king) vid. 1 Sam. xxix. 6. Probably the ה before מִמְקֻומָּם acts as a ו conversive, (the words מִמְקֻומָּם קָדוֹשׁ יַהֲלֹכְוּ may be taken as one word, and to represent a verb) so as to bring the verb יַהֲלֹכְוּ into the same tense as בָּאֹו; and the words מִמְקֻומָּם קָדוֹשׁ are perhaps placed between the two verbs, instead of the order being מִמְקֻומָּם קָדוֹשׁ וְבָאֹו יַהֲלֹכְוּ מִמְקֻומָּם קָדוֹשׁ, to shew that קָדוֹשׁ is to be supplied with בָּאֹו as well as construed with יַהֲלֹכְוּ, as we should say, "They went to and from the place;" whereas if יַהֲלֹכְוּ had come next to וְבָאֹו, Mendelssohn's rendering would almost necessarily have been right. We find here, "the place of the holy man," used for "the place properly belonging to the holy man," i. e. the place of dignity and trust, just as we had in chap. iii. "the place of justice and right," for "the place where justice and right ought to be, the place properly belonging to them." קָדוֹשׁ need not mean here "a king," but merely a holy and uncorrupt man, such as ought to hold all offices of trust; such as בַּן עֲשֹׂו, a phrase which is evidently used in the last clause of the verse as synonymous with קָרוֹשׁ. בַּן not unfrequently signifies "rightly," "aright;" as in 2 Kings vii. 9, Ps. xc. 12, and perhaps exxvii. 2. The verb יַשְׁתַּבְּחֵוּ being in the Hithpael expresses that their quiet and unostentatious lives cause them to be forgotten, that "they sink of themselves into oblivion." The future is evidently used in this word as a frequentative tense, as we say, "The bad man will never prosper," for "never prospers."

וְאֵשֶׁר כִּי-עָשָׂו גַּסְיוֹנָה הַבָּל : אֵשֶׁר אַיִן-נָעֲשָׂה פְּתִינָם
מִעָשָׂה קְרֻעָה מְרֻחָה עַל-כֵּן מַלְאָ לֶב בְּנֵי-הָאָדָם

The whole of the verse is an objection against Divine providence, and ends, "this too was unsatisfactory;" Solomon proceeds to answer it, in the following passage.

בָּבָיְר is of course put for **בָּבָיְר**, and means, as Mendlessohn says, "In the very city where they had done right."

Ver. 11. "Because men see that that full retribution is "not executed speedily on an evil deed which would be as it "were a sentence on the deed carried into effect, and therefore "an explanation of it, they imagine that there will never be an "account or a judgment, and their heart within them 'is fully "set' (is bold) to do evil.

"**אֵין נָעֲשָׂה פְּתִינָם**. Here apparently we have a feminine verb "agreeing with a masculine noun; since the word **אֵין** shews that "**נָעֲשָׂה** must be the participle feminine Niphal. For the participle "masculine is **נָעַשָּׂה**, and if the word in the text had been the pre-"**terite** masculine Niphal, we should have had **לֹא** instead of **אֵין** "which never is joined with tenses; and that **פְּתִינָם** is mascu-"**line** appears from the passage in Esther i. 'And **וַיַּשְׁמַע פְּתִינָם** 'the decree was heard.' We must therefore either suppose the "vowel-point under **שָׁה** to be wrong, or devise some other "construction out of the words, as making **רַעָה** agree with "**נָעַשָּׂה**." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. This verse may either be a further objection against the inequality of condition of the good and bad, on the ground that it forms an encouragement to men to do wrong boldly, or, which is more probable, be a part of the answer to the objection in the first verse; and the general sense would then be, "many men encourage themselves in bad practices from observing

hæc quidem res irrita est (*vel* hujus vitæ imperfæctio). Quod nulla fit quoad sententiam de malefacto latam festinatio, idcirco animosiores ad male-

that evil deeds do not meet with immediate recompense;" "but," he says, "they do not view the matter in its true light, for though the sinner be allowed to go on sinning a long time, and enjoy somewhat of the transitory blessings of this life, it will in the end be best for those who fear God, and in a future state all will be set right."

פְּתַנְמָ is the Chaldee for "a decree," or "sentence;" vid. Esth. i. 20, Dan. iv. 14, Ezra v. 37. Mendelssohn seems to take it to mean more than "the sentence," viz. the "execution of it," which, as he implies, would be a sort of explanation of the permission of evil under the Divine government, the punishment of it explaining this paradox. There is nothing in the sentence for **נִעֲשָׂה** to agree with but **מִתְרָה**, and if it does the sense is, "because no speed is made with respect to the execution of the sentence as to a deed of evil," i. e. "on an evil deed," **פְּתַנְמָ** and **מִעֲשָׂה דָּרְעָה** being placed absolutely, for **פְּתַנְמָ** is not the construct form. Some say that after **פְּתַנְמָ** the same word should be supplied in a state of construction with **מִעֲשָׂה**, as in Ps. lx. 5, "Thou has made us to drink wine, astonishment;" i.e. wine, the wine of astonishment, for it is **יְמִין**, and not **יְמִינָה**; and in Job xxxi. 11, **פְּלִילִים עֹזֶן**, where **עֹזֶן** is not in a state of construction; and then the sense here would be, "the sentence, the sentence of an evil deed." But this is unnecessary. The expression, "no haste is made," is equivalent to, "God does not hasten," and the clause means, "because God does not hasten the execution of the sentence on an evil deed." For instances of nouns placed absolutely vid. vii. 26.

ficere audendum fiunt homines. Licet peccator censes malefaciat, ac diu porrigat ei *Deus veniam*, (*vel* “et diu ei *dies* porrigat,”) nihilominus ego scio Deum reverentibus bene futurum esse quod eum revereantur. Idcircone autem fieri non potest ut bonâ utatur improbus fortunâ et vitam suam, sicut umbram illam quidem *fluxam*, producat, quia

מָלֵא is an adjective. “Their heart is full to do evil,” i. e. “they dare to do it.” So Esth. vii. 5, “Who is he (אֲשֶׁר מָלַא) (לְבּוֹ לִעְשֹׂת כֵּן) who is full as to his heart (dares) to do thus?”

Observe that **מִעְשָׁה** is in construction with the substantive **רָעָה** which follows it.

Ver. 12. “Supposing that the sinner does evil a hundred times, and God is long-suffering to him, and does not take vengeance on him, that is no wonder in the eyes of the intelligent man; for I know too that in the end every one will receive his due reward.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. After **מָנִיךְ** understand **אֲפּוֹ**; and construe, “God prolongs his forbearance to him.” (“Long of nose,” and “short of nose,” in Hebrew mean, “patient or long-suffering,” “and violent or impatient” respectively.) Or else understand **שָׁמֵן**.

With **מִתְּאַת** understand **פָּעָם**, “times.” **כִּי גַם** is, “but still,” i. e. “nevertheless.” “I know that their fearing God will turn out to the good of those who fear him.”

Ver. 13. “If then the fear of God brings abiding prosperity and substantial happiness to man, why should not he ‘who has not that fear of God possess at least apparent good, ‘and prosperity fallacious as a dream that vanishes away? For ‘if there were no transitory happiness, no semblance of good connected with the wickedness of sinners, man would be almost

בְּחַם לְעִשּׂוֹת בָּעַ : אֲשֶׁר חֶטְאָ עָשָׂה בָּעַ מֵאַת 12
 וּמְאַרְיךָ לֹא בַּיְם יְזִירָעָנִי אֲשֶׁר יְהִי-טוֹב לִרְאֵי
 הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יְרָאוּ מִלְּפָנָיו : וּטוֹב לְאִיהָה 13
 לְרַשְׁעַ וּלְאִירָקִיךְ יָמִים בְּצָל אֲשֶׁר אִינְנוּ בָּא מִלְּפָנָי

" necessitated to do good and eschew evil in his actions ; for if " a man were to eat gall and wormwood by choice, when regal " dainties were spread before him, he would not be called a sinner but a fool or a madman ; and so it is with good and evil ; " if good were always pleasant and agreeable, and evil offensive " and bitter, the man who does evil would not be a sinner but " an infatuated person, and the denial of man's free agency " would almost necessarily follow. Hence evil must of necessity " be sometimes sweet and pleasant for an hour ; while all the " time it is in itself a mere apparent good and a fleeting prosperity which has nothing substantial in it. Thus the sense of " these two verses will be, ' I know that it will be a real good " to the fearers of God that they stand in awe of him ; and " why should not the wicked have happiness and length of " days which is only as a shadow which vanishes and passes " away, because he does not fear God ? It is strange that the " contrary should be expected.' " Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Mendlessohn is the only commentator who has perceived that this verse ought to be read with a note of interrogation. The words **וְלֹא-יָאַרְיךָ יָמִים בְּכָל** must be taken together to mean, "nor have a long life, a transitory and fleeting thing at the longest," "which is still a mere shadow." Or we may take **כָּל** to mean "a shelter," as it has already done ; "nor have a long life as his shelter and only trust ; (which must come

14 אֱלֹהִים : יְשַׁחַבֵּל אֲשֶׁר גָּעָשָׂה עַל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁצַׁחַקְיִם אֲשֶׁר מִגְעַע אֱלֹהִים בְּמַעַשָּׂה הַרְשָׁעִים וַיִּשְׁרַׁעַם שְׁמִגְעַע אֱלֹהִים בְּמַעַשָּׂה הַצְּדִיקִים אִמְרָתִי
 15 שְׁגַם-זֶה הַבָּל : וַיַּבְחַתִּי אֲנָנוּ אֶת-הַשְּׁמַחָה אֲשֶׁר אִזְׁנָה
 טוֹב לְאָרָם תְּחִת הַשְּׁמַשׁ כִּי אִסְּלָאָבֵל וַלְשָׁתוֹת
 וַלְשָׁמוֹת וְהַוָּא יְלַעֲנוּ בְּעַמְלָוּ יְמִי חַיּוֹ אֲשֶׁר-נָתַן-לָו
 16 הָאֱלֹהִים תְּחִת הַשְּׁמַשׁ : בְּאַשְׁר נָתַתִּי אֶת-לְבִי לְרַעַת

to an end)." Dathe neglects the accents altogether, and renders thus from *בְּכָל*, "Umbræ similis est, qui nullam Dei habet reverentiam." (He has done well in the next verse in perceiving at last that *הַבָּל* sometimes means in this book, "an unsatisfactory circumstance in the world," "imperfectio hujus vitæ.")

Ver. 14. "It is true that this unsatisfactory state of things "exists upon the earth, that there are righteous men to whom "it happens as if they had done the deeds of the wicked, and "vice versa; but this fallacious and transitory prosperity of the "evil-doers is no evidence at all with respect to true felicity, "and those who are to enjoy it." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. Solomon is repeating the argument against the Divine providence, "that the relative condition of the good and bad is very unsatisfactory," and he states in the following verses the inference he had formerly drawn from this argument before he took a more enlarged view of the Divine government, as including both this world and the next, or which he would have drawn from if he had only contemplated this life without taking the next into account.

14 Deum haud reveretur? “Est quidem,” dicebam,
 “res irrita (*vel* imperfectio hujus vitæ) quæ fit in
 terrâ, quod sint justi quibus accident improborum
 factis digna, atque improbi quibus accident justo-
 rum factis digna.” Dicebam hanc rem irritam (*vel*
 15 vitæ imperfectionem) esse; laudabamque lætitiam,
 “quippe nil esse homini sub sole bonum, præter-
 quam edere, ac bibere, ac lætari, quodque hoc apud
 eum maneret in labore ejus per dies vitæ ejus quam
 16 sub sole dederit ei Deus;” dum mentem meam ad
 cognoscendam sapientiam applicabam laboriosum is-

Ver. 15, 16. “These two verses must be taken together. He says, ‘While I applied myself to understand moral philosophy and practical wisdom so as to know the way in which a man should proceed in order to attain happiness, and at the same time confined myself to the contemplation of the matters which take place upon the earth, i. e. so long as I formed my judgment on this subject only from what passes under our daily observation with respect to it, viz. the unavoidable chance which attends the sons of men on the earth, even if they labour incessantly by day and night, and sleep be driven from their eyes by reason of the multitude of their anxieties; as long as I did this, I was for choosing the opinion of men of pleasure and praising mirth, for that there was no good under the sun but eating and drinking and merriment.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Ver. 15. אָשֵׁר means, “as though,” in this place. לִיְהֹוּ is put for לִיְהֹה לֹא, “adhere to him,” i. e. “continue with him;” like קָרַב, Ps. v. 5, for קָרַב עַמְּךָ. יָגַד is put for בָּעֵת אָשֵׁר, “at the time that,”

Ver. 16. בָּעֵת אָשֵׁר is put for בָּעֵת אֲשֶׁר, “at the time that,”

tud opus *solum* contemplando quod in terrâ fit,
quandoquidem nec diu nec etiam noctu somnum
oculis ejus ullum videat. Itaque contemplatus sum 17
totum opus Dei; operis enim quod sub sole fit
non potest homo rationem comperire; quandoquidem
in exquirendo laborat nec tamen comperit;
immo licet eam se putet sapiens intelligere non CAP.
(reverâ) potest comperire. Namque hanc omnem 1.

i. e. "when." בְּ is a preposition of time; as in Numb. xxiii. 23,
בָּעֵת, "at the time," i. e. "at the time appointed by God,"
which divination cannot affect.

"To learn wisdom and to observe, &c." is equivalent to,
"to learn wisdom by observing, &c."

The commentators differ as to the rendering of the words
בְּ וְכִי. Mendelssohn evidently renders them מִנְאָה, i. e. "even
if," "even though," agreeably with the sense of כִּי in iv. 14,
"Although he came out of the house of bondmen," and so in
Exod. v. 11, "Although none of your work shall be diminished,
&c." And the sense will then be, "While I applied myself to
learn practical wisdom in contemplating the (vanity of the)
business done under the sun, even though a man labours in-
cessantly day and night, I approved of mirth." (We find עַמְּנָן
used exactly in this way at i. 13 of this book, where he is
pointing out the futility of all human occupations, and where
as well as in this verse in speaking of the "business which is
done under the sun" he intends to express the vanity of it,
which as we find in the first chapter had led him to make trial
of pleasure.) Others render מִנְאָה כִּי "since even."
עַמְּנָן must then imply "laborious employment," a sense which I am not
inclined to give to it, and the translation will be that which
I have given in my Latin version, viz. "When I applied my-

חכמָה וְלִרְאֹות אֶת-הַעֲנָנוֹן אֲשֶׁר נָעַשָּׂה עַל-הָאָרֶץ כִּי
גַם בַּיּוֹם וּבַלְילָה שְׁלֵגָה בְּעִינֵינוֹ אִינָנוּ רָאָה : וּרְאִיתִי¹⁷
אֶת-כָּל-מְעַשָּׂה הָאֱלֹהִים כִּי לֹא יוּכֶל הָאָדָם לְמִצְוָה
אֶת-הַמְּעַשָּׂה אֲשֶׁר נָעַשָּׂה תְּחִתְהַשְּׁמֶשׁ בְּשֶׁל אֲשֶׁר
יַעֲמֵל הָאָדָם לְבָקֵשׁ וְלֹא יִמְצָא וְגַם אִם-יָאמֵר
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חַכְמָה לְרוּת לֹא יוּכֶל לְמִצְאָה : כִּי אֶת-כָּל-זֶה

self to learn practical wisdom in contemplating the toilsome work that is done under the sun, for that man even rests not night or day, but labours incessantly."

Ver. 17. "But I turned back and said, 'If I wish to understand even a portion of the ways of providence, I must necessarily make myself acquainted with the whole of the works of God, as to what they have been and what they will be in this world and in the world to come. For man cannot attain the understanding of anything of the ways of Divine providence if he only make himself acquainted with the work done under the sun; for that is like a dream without an interpretation, or a question without an answer; and man will not become acquainted with the true explanations of actions and the sentence (of the Deity) upon them, if he does not exalt his knowledge to what is remote, and what shall take place when time is at an end.'" Mendelssohn.

NOTE. בְּאַשְׁר לֹא שָׁר בְּשֶׁל אֲשֶׁר is for "in respect of that," i. e. "inasmuch as," "since." In Jonah i. 12, בְּשֶׁל is for "in respect of me," "on my account;" compare Jonah i. 8, בְּאַשְׁר לִמי, "in respect of whom," i. e. "on account of whom."

אִם means again, "to think with oneself."

Ver. 1. "He proceeds to explain how it is impossible for

נְתַתִּי אֶל-לֵבָבִי וְלֹבֶר אֶת-כָּלָזָה אֲשֶׁר הַצְדִיקִים
וְהַחֲכָמִים וְעַבְרִים בֵּין הָאֱלֹהִים גַּם-אֶחָבָה גַּם-
שְׁנָאָה אֵין יוֹדֵעַ הָאָדָם הַכָּל לִפְנֵי הָמָן: הַכָּל בְּאֲשֶׁר
לְכָל מִקְרָה אַחֲרָה לְצִדְקָה וְלֹרְשָׁע לְטוֹב וְלֹטְהָרָה

"a wise man to comprehend anything of the works or ways
"of God, if he only direct his attention to what takes place
"under the sun. He says, 'All these considerations I laid to
"heart in order fully to explain this, that the good and their
"actions are all in the hand of God, under his care and provi-
"dence, and yet that if a man considers only the contingencies
"of this life and confines his attention to them, he cannot know
"whether he is an object of love or hatred with the great God,
"for that every thing he sees before him and about him bears
"a uniform aspect and character as if God did not interfere
"with human affairs.'" Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The first את-כָּלָזָה probably refers to the consideration mentioned in the last verse, that if we would satisfactorily understand moral phenomena we must contemplate the next world as well as the present; and he says, "I laid to heart, I took into account all this consideration so as to be able to investigate fully and satisfactorily the following paradox, that though the righteous are in the hands of God, there is nothing in the events and contingencies of this life to assure us whom God loves or hates, or, in other words, there is no display of his love to the good or his hatred to the wicked, for that the same chances happen to all. The וְ before לֹבֶר is merely conducive as I said at viii. 9, "וְנִתְנוּ וּבוּ," and means, "so as to explain," as at verse 11 of this chapter וְרָאָה meant "so as to observe."

ratiocinationem ad mentem meam applicui ad totam hanc rem accurate disquirendam, scilicet “justos et sapientes et opera eorum in manu esse Dei, sed, quoad quaecunque illis ante oculos sint, tum amorem Ejus tum odium neminem hominum posse cognoscere; etenim omnia *cuique* similiter ac *reliquis* omnibus evenire; eundem casum justo accidere

The Targumist renders עֲבָדִים by the Chaldee שְׂבָרִים (שְׂבָרָה) in Chaldee being the same as (מעשָׁה); and this is right; for if the word meant “servants,” (i. e. disciples), the pointing of it would be this מְלֵבָדִים, like עֲבָדִים and רְגָלִים; but with the kametz-gadol under the ב it must be the plural of עֲבָרָה, “a work.”

תְּמַמָּם...תְּמַמָּם are equivalent to the Latin “tum”...“tum,” as we find them again in ver 6, infra.

We must supply “whereas,” or, “and yet,” before the second clause of the verse. The Hebrew language is often very abrupt.

“The righteous are in the hand of God,” means that they must necessarily be under his special favour, and that it rests with him to reward and bless them.

We must supply “of God” after אֶחָדָה, from the last אלְהִים.

הִכְלָל is put absolutely, “as to all before them,” i. e. “as far as they can gather from observation on all that takes place in their time.” See Notes at i. 10, and ii. 7.

Ver. 2. “Every thing happens to each individual just as to all the rest, and there is no difference made between the good and the bad, &c.’ is the same construction as ‘I am as thou art,’ ‘My people as thy people.’” Mendlessohn.

et improbo, bono puroque et impuro, sacra facienti
et ei qui non sacrificet; probum esse sicut peccatorem,
jusjurandum reformidantem sicut jurantem; et hoc 3
sane malum esse in omnibus quæ sub sole fiant
rebus, quod idem sit omnibus casus, atque animus
insuper hominum malitiâ plenus, et vesaniæ sint per

Ver. 3. "If the matter were finally left as it is in this
“world without any interpretation, as it were, of the dream, it
“would certainly be an absolute and unmixed evil for the same
“chance to happen to all, and that it should be as we see it is
“in the world, that there is no difference between the well-doer
“and the evil-doer, and that the righteousness of the righteous
“and the wickedness of the wicked should be like a fleeting
“dream without profit to the good, or harm to the sinner.
“Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? Far be it
“from God to sanction evil, and from the Almighty to permit
“injustice; and yet since it must be allowed that greater wrong
“and evil and injustice cannot be conceived than for the same
“accidents to happen under all circumstances to the righteous
“and the wicked without any difference or respect of persons,
“it would follow according to this view of the subject, (heaven
“forgive the thought!) that God would be perverting justice in
“his dealings with the righteous on the one hand, and that with
“respect to the prosperous sinner on the other the permission
“of evil would be attributable to the Deity, if we do not believe
“in the immortality of the soul and future retribution: for
“that this too would be a great evil and wrong that the heart
“of the sons of men should be full of evil, and madness should
“be in their hearts while they live, and after that they should
“go to the dead, i. e. should return to the grave and perish for
“ever, and not be chastened or tried as silver is tried that they

וְלֹטֶם אַ וְלֹזֶבֶת וְלֹאֲשֵר אִינְנוּ וְבָחַ בְּטוֹב כְּחַטָּא
הַנְּשָׁבָע בְּאֵשֶׁר שְׁבוּעָה יָרָא : זֶה לֹּעֲבָד בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר-³
נִעְשָׂה תְּתֵת הַשְּׁמֵשׁ כִּי-מְקֻרָה אַחֲרָ לְכָל וְגַם לְבָ
בְּנֵי-הָאָדָם מְלָא-רָע וְחוֹלְלוֹת בְּלִבְבָּס בְּחַיָּהֶם

" may know and perceive that they did not do good, but went
" after vanity without distinguishing between apparent good and
" that which is real and substantial. Surely this would not be
" the work of a wise being to create intelligent souls, the glory
" and ornament of creation, and leave them to be full of evil
" and madness for a few years, and after that to go to the
" grave, and perish hopelessly and irrecoverably. Is it pos-
" sible either that God should form a creature merely to injure
" it and wreak upon it an irreparable vengeance, or that there
" should be found under the government of the Lord of mercies
" a living being whose condition is completely and absolutely
" miserable?" (as would be the case if there were no hope of
an hereafter to make up for the inconsistencies of this present
life.) Mendelssohn.

NOTE. Solomon is drawing a melancholy picture of the condition of man as viewed with respect to this life only, which is one of such unmitigated evil that a future state is necessary in order "to justify the ways of God with man." The sense is continuous from verse 1. of this chapter, and through several verses which follow. They are all in the obliqua oratio. The evils which he details in them are the difficulty which he says in verse 1. he had explained by taking a future state into account, and are included under לְבָור אֶת-כָּלְיָה.

Rosenmuller would render עַם in this verse "consequently," agreeably with the verse, "Because the sentence on an evil

וְאַחֲרָיו אֶל-הַמִּתִּים : כִּי-מֹעֲדֵךְ יִבְחַר אֶל כָּל-
הַחַיִם יִשְׁבַּתְּךָ בְּטַהֲרָה חַי הוּא טוֹב מִן-הָאָרֶץ

deed is not speedily executed, the sons of men are bold to evil ;” but perhaps it is better as Mendlessohn does to take the clause beginning with **וְגַם** as expressing an additional remark on the evils of the world, that besides the indiscriminating sweep of accident and calamity which includes the good equally with the bad, the sons of men should be full of evil, malice, and wickedness while they live, and then die without hope, a truly miserable end of a wretched life, for if death be annihilation the most wretched life is preferable, as he proceeds to say in the next verse. It may also be implied, as Mendlessohn says, that it would be an evil for the sons of men to be wicked here, and not meet with the due reward of their actions in a future state ; but on this interpretation it is difficult to trace the connexion of argument between this verse and the following indicated by the conjunction **כִּי** at the beginning of the latter. “Evil” and “madness” are probably only mentioned here as internal sources of misery in the world, i. e. of mental misery especially, the “accidents” expressing the external sources of physical misery ; and the whole verse might be paraphrased thus, “This surely would be an evil state of things in the world, that externally we should all be liable to the same chances, and internally, we should be miserable from the effects of sin, and this all our lives, and that after that the grave should be our only prospect.”

Ver. 4. “ ‘Whoever he be who shall be chosen.’ **יִבְחַר**, “the Keri on this word is **יִחְבֶּר**. The meaning according to “the Chetib is, ‘Whoever you may choose of the sons of men, “even if he be the most abject, and afflicted, (as degraded

vitam in corde eorum, et postmodo ad mortuos
abeant: quilibet enim eligeretur, fiduciam esse cunctis
viventibus quod ‘cani vivo melius sit quam mortuo

“among men as the dog among animals) still he must be to
“all men a confidence, i. e. a sign and a proof that a live dog
“however degraded and scornfully treated is better off than the
“noblest of animals when dead; in other words, that the most
“abject life is better than that death which has no life after it,
“and that this is an evil and a punishment which nothing can
“exceed; the word יָשַׁן being used here for יְשַׁנֵּי, ‘he is.’ The
“accents render it necessary to take אֶל כָּל־חַיִם as part of
“the predicate of the sentence, and therefore as connected with
“מִ אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר or
“forming part of the subject of the sentence. If we read
“יְהִיבָּר with the Chetib, the rendering will be, ‘Whoever is
“made up of body and soul, whoever has the two parts of
“our nature in union and not yet dissolved by death, how-
“ever degraded his condition, is an evidence to all living, &c.’
“and the general sense is the same.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. Solomon is here expressing the misery of dissolution by death, if we do not believe in a future state and regard ourselves merely as living the life of beasts, as is implied by his using the adage contained in this verse, which is an ancient Arabic proverb mentioned by Golius in his *Adagia*, Cent. II. No. 3. “It would be an evil thing surely that we should live miserably here without recompense for virtue, and full of malice and wickedness, and then die; an end to which the most wretched life would be preferable; for take whom you will, all are sure that even he the most abject of men is better off than the most noble of the human race, if the latter have already died the death of the beast, and perished body and soul.” It is unneces-

leoni;’ nam scire quidem viventes se morituros 5
esse; mortuos vero nil prorsus scire; nec esse amplius iis mercedem, quasi periisset eorum memoria;
tum amorem tum odium invidiamque eorum dudum 6

sary to take יָשַׁן in any but its ordinary sense of “there is.” “Take any living man, ... there is confidence to all; i. e. all are sure, that he is better off than a dead man however illustrious in life, if he be now annihilated;” “quilibet eligeretur” being parenthetic; and “eligeretur” in the imperative of the obliqua oratio.

The literal translation of the phrase לִכְלֵב חַי הַזֶּא טֹוב is, “As for a live dog he is better off than a dead lion.” We have several times had טֹוב מִ in the sense “better off than;” and of the construction לִכְלֵב חַי, (which is taken absolutely and means, “as to a live dog”), we have several other instances, as לִמְלֵךְ וּכְוֹ “as to the king,” as appears from 2 Kings v. 18, and Ps. xvi. 3, לִקְדָּשִׁים, “as for the saints.” The above sense may be expressed in Latin by “melius est cani vivo quam leoni mortuo,” or in Greek, “κυνι ζῶντι βέλτιον ἔστιν οὐ λεοντι τεθνηκότι,” but it would be incorrect to construe the passage thus, הַזֶּא טֹוב, “it is better,” (i. e. “there is a more enviable lot”) לִכְלֵב חַי, “to a live dog,” מִזְהָרִירָה הַמֵּת, “than to a dead lion;” because the construction of מִזְהָרִירָה הַמֵּת thus becomes imperfect, and אֲנָה, not הַזֶּא, is the Hebrew for “it.”

Ver. 5. “For the living know indeed that they must die; and in spite of all the distress and apprehension involved in this knowledge, it is better than being dead and without knowledge altogether; for the destruction of the soul is the very summation of evil to a rational being; and those who are ‘absolutely annihilated with the destruction of the soul know nothing at all, and have no longer any reward, but are just

הַמְתָּה : בִּי קְחֵיכֶם יֹרְעִיכֶם שִׁמְתָּהוּ וְהַמְתָּהִים אַיִּנְמָם 5
 יֹרְעִיכֶם מְאוֹמָה וְאַיִּזְעָזָר לְהָם שְׁבָר בִּי נְשָׁכָח
 וְנִרְמָס : גַּם אֲהַבְתֶּם גַּם-שְׂנִיאתֶם גַּם-קִנְאָתֶם בְּבָר 6

“as if the very memory of them were forgotten (as far as they themselves are concerned).” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. If their posthumous fame be ever so great, on the above hypothesis they are unconscious of it, so that it is no reward to them for their labour and toil in life.

Observe that this as well as the verses which precede and follow it are to be read as in the obliqua oratio (a very important feature in my new version of this part of the book); they all contain a statement of the inexplicable evils of the condition of man upon earth on the hypothesis that there is no future state, i. e. of the difficulties of which a more enlarged view of the providence of God in the next world as well as in this had furnished the solution. It cannot of course, even on that hypothesis, be said of all the dead that their memory is forgotten; and the meaning of the last clause must be, “the dead know nothing at all, so that they have no longer any reward *in fame*, as if the remembrance of them were forgotten;” i. e. “just as if the very memory of them were actually extinct, because if they are annihilated in death, no posthumous reputation can be of any value to them.” שְׁבָר means literally, “wages.”

Ver. 6. “All their works and actions, and the conceptions “of their minds are as though they had never been; their love “and their hatred have perished, their hope and their fear, “their pride and their clamour have consumed away like “smoke.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. I have chosen here to render חַלְקָדְבָּן, “profit from,”

אָבָרָה וְחַלֵק אִינְדָלָם עֹזֶל לְעוֹלָם בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר-
 7 גָעָשָׂה תְּחִתְ הַשְׁמֶשׁ : לֹךְ אָכֵל בְּשִׁמְךָ לְחַמְדָ
 וְשִׁתָה בְּלֵב-טֻוב יִגְנֶךָ כִּי בְּכָר רָצָה הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת-
 8 מְעַשְׂיךָ : בְּכָל-עַת יוֹהֵן בְּגַדְךָ לְבָנִים וְשָׁמָן עַל-
 9 רְאֵשָׁךָ אֶל-יְחִסָּר : רָאָה חַיִם עַם-אַתָּה אֲשֶׁר-אַהֲבָתָ
 בְּלִימֵי חַיִם הַבָּלֵךְ אֲשֶׁר נָטוֹלָךְ תְּחִתְ הַשְׁמֶשׁ בְּלִי-
 יָמִי הַבָּלֵךְ כִּי הוּא חַלְקוֹ בְּחַיִם וּבְעַמְלָךְ אֲשֶׁר-
 10 אַתָּה עַמֵּל תְּחִתְ הַשְׁמֶשׁ : בְּלִי אֲשֶׁר תִּמְצָא יָדֶךָ

rather than, “portion in,” as this is more in accordance with other passages in this book where the same word occurs.

Ver. 7. “If there were nothing at all after death certainly “men of pleasure would be in the right, in that they eat luxuriously, and drink, and carouse all their days, while they “say, ‘Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die;’ so that “agreeably with this perishable doctrine it would be proper “to address a man in the words of this verse, ‘Go eat thy “bread in cheerfulness, &c., for God hath already approved “of thy conduct, and given it his full consent, and thou art “not about to undergo judgment and account before him.’” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. If there be no judgment to come, God may be said to have already and beforehand given his consent and approbation to anything we may do, in having implanted in us the inclination or propensity to do it without designing to call us to account for it, and we are not in a state of probation, but free and unaccountable agents.

periisse; nec fructum iis amplius esse in æternum ex
 7 omnibus quæ sub sole fiant rebus: iret igitur et come-
 deret quisque latus panem suum, ac biberet hilari
 corde vinum suum, quippe cujus jamdudum Deus
 8 facta comprobaverit; essent vestes ejus semper can-
 9 didæ, neque deesset ejus capiti unguentum; frueretur
 vitâ cum feminâ quam amet omnibus diebus vitæ suæ
 evanidæ quos sub sole ei dederit *Deus*, omnibus, *in-*
quam, evanidis suis diebus, utpote cujus hic fructus sit
 10 e vitâ, eque labore suo quo sub sole fungatur; ageret
 quicquid comperiverit (*vel* invenerit manus sua) in po-
 testate suâ agendi esse, siquidem non sit in Orco quò

“*¶* must be rendered here “as if,” (as it was in verse 5), because the passage is in obliqua oratio, and the last clause of this verse means “As if God had not placed thee here in a state of probation, and were not going to call thee to account.” So in ver. 10, “as if there were no work, &c.” or “for that there is no work,” which means the same; see Mendlessohn’s Preface, p. 89.

Ver. 8. “‘ Always wear clean and white garments, and let “thy head be supplied with good oil.’” Mendlessohn.

Ver. 9. “In the opinion of those who deny the immor-
 tality of the soul, these sensual gratifications must be the only
 “profit a man can gain from this life, or by the labour which
 “he performs.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. “Life of thy vanity” means “thy transitory life,” as it has already done. “*¶* again means “as if,” or “for that.”

Ver. 10. “For is it not the case according to that doctrine
 “that there is no action or reflection or knowledge or wisdom
 “in the grave whither thou art going? Do then all that is
 “in thy power to beautify and adorn thyself, even though it be

vadat vel negotium vel ratiocinatio vel scientia vel sapientia." Revertebar ad hoc sub sole observandum, 11 "non semper velocibus contingere cursus victoriam, nec belli fortibus, nec sapientibus victum, nec soller-tibus divitias, nec doctis favorem, sed fatum casum-

" wrong and violence, rapacity or oppression. And what matter "if it be? Thou wilt come at last to die and descend into the "grave, so that thy only portion is whatever thou canst gain in "this thy transitory life. Follow therefore without restraint the "devices of thy own heart, swear, lie, kill, steal, commit "adultery, deny thyself scarcely any enjoyment. See now to "what a conclusion these arguments tend; how thou wilt thus "sink lower and lower, and be swallowed up at last in the "depths of fatal doctrines if thou wilt not believe in the im- "mortality of the soul and recompense in the life to come."

Mendlessohn.

NOTE. I have substituted the third person for the second in the Latin version of verses 7, 8, 9, 10, in order that they might be kept in the obliqua oratio, and "quisque" for "tu," which is addressed to mankind in general. "Iret," "frucretur," &c. are therefore equivalent to imperatives.

Ver. 11. "He here proceeds to fortify himself with power- "ful arguments against him who denies the immortality of the "soul, and says, 'I saw on the other hand that even men of "pleasure do not always attain to all their desires and wishes "in this world, and that oftentimes all their labour is in vain, "and their industry terminates in confusion; for since they do "not believe in an over-ruling providence they are a mark, as "it were, for the arrows of chance and accident, and every "thing must happen to them fortuitously, because in the hand

לעשות בבְּחֵךְ עשה כי אין מעשה וחשbon ורעת
וחכמה בשאול אשר אתה הלֹךְ שמה: שבתי וראה 11
תחת-השָׁמֶשׁ כי לא לקָלִים המרוין ולא לנבוין
הפָּלָחָה גם לא לחֲכָםִים לחם וגם לא לבָּנִים
ערן וגם לא לזָקִים חן ביעת ונפנעה יקרה את-

“of man there is no power to effect anything with certainty,’ “and consequently the recommendation to ‘do all that thou ‘findest to be in thy power to do,’ must be altogether vain “and nugatory.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. We have here again the conductive רָא before בְּ. “I turned back, I recalled myself so as to observe that to act even in this world on the short-sighted doctrine detailed above is practically impossible, for that man cannot make sure of anything which he seeks to secure or enjoy, but is altogether the creature of chance and accident; so that without belief in a future state our condition here is truly deplorable.” We find from the above remarks of Mendlessohn that he translates the first clause of the last verse thus, “Whatever thy hand finds to be in thy power to do, do;” a rendering better in accordance with the accents (by which the words תְּמַצֵּא יְדֶךָ לעשות בְּחֵךְ are closely connected together) than the usual translation, “Whatever thy hand finds to do, do with all thy might.” (The phrase “Whatever thy hand findeth,” is equivalent to “Whatever thou findest,” רָא being put for a man’s active powers; see 1 Sam. xxv. 8, Lev. xii. 8.) Mendlessohn’s rendering is to be preferred for the following reason. בְּ always means “ability,” “power,” not “might” or “strength,” and must therefore signify, “within the compass of thy ability,” “in thy power,” not “to the utmost of thy strength and might.” The

12 גָּלִים : בְּ גַם לֹא-יָלֻעַ הָאָדָם אֶת-עַתָּה בְּקָנִים
שְׁנָאָחָזִים בְּמִצְוָה רָעוֹת וּבְכָפְלִים הָאָחָזּוֹת בְּפֶחֶד
בְּהָם יוּקְשִׁים בְּנֵי הָאָדָם לְעֵת רָעוֹת בְּשַׁתְּפָול
עַלְיָהָם פְּתָאָם :

latter should be its sense if we construe it with עַשֵּׂה, since this verse is clearly a recommendation to make the most of this life if there be none after it, not a warning against attempting anything that is not in our power. But if we construe it with לְעַשׂות the clause will have the sense which the context requires, “Do all in thy power to do,” “all thou possibly canst,” and בְּבָחָק bear its true meaning.

The phrase, “The race is not to the swift,” &c. means, “It is not necessarily won by him because he is swift,” &c.

כל is “light,” like the Latin “expeditus.” חן means, “popular favour,” and may be rendered, “popularity.”

Ver. 12. “He here compares the sons of men to birds “and fishes which unwittingly fall into a snare, and there is “none to say, ‘Restore.’ There is none to pity them or have “compassion on them, for that was the purpose for which they “were created, and such would be the actual condition of the “sons of men if there were no judgment and no reckoning “before Him who spake and the world was made. And now “after all these reflections go and consider with thyself how “much perplexity and confusion is necessarily brought upon “thee, if thou dost not believe that the soul will exist after the “death of the body, and that it is about to give an account “and a reckoning before the King of kings. Is it not an evil “thing and bitter to have left the fountain of living waters, “the waters of truth, which fail not? If there be nothing at “all after death, (heaven forgive the thought!) God has created

12 que his omnibus accidere; nescire enim hominem
fatum suum, sicut pisces qui capiantur reti exitiali,
et sicut aves quæ tendiculâ teneantur, sicut illas
irretiri homines tempore fatali, ubi iis inopinanter
incidentur."

"his world only to injure intelligent creatures; and what becomes then of the glory of God for which he created all of them? Where is his great mercy and kindness to all his works if he only created the choicest of creatures in order to injure him? Very much to our present purpose is what a wise poet has said, 'The Creator has left us the fountain of life, in reserving for us blessing for our souls.' Thereby we can comfort ourselves about the vanity of terrestrial things, and the painfulness of the defects in our condition; there God will judge the righteous and the wicked, and each will receive the just reward of his actions. There there is a doom for every business and for every work.

"I have now placed you in possession of what I conceive to be the true meaning of the wise man in the above passage. "For surely he did not aim therein at exciting doubt in the mind of the believer, but rather at placing truth on its basis, and establishing the true faith in the soul of the intelligent man; since the belief here developed is the foundation and radical principle of our Holy Law, as is known to every one who is called by the name of Israel." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. I have rendered *נָזַר* in the first clause of this verse by "doom," which expresses the idea actually conveyed by this word as placed absolutely and without any other word to qualify it, much better than "time;" for when so placed it usually expresses "a period or crisis in man's life over which he has no control." See Num. xviii. 23, *נָזַר*, "At the appointed

SECTIO DUODECIMA.

Præterea hoc exemplum sapientiæ sub sole vidi, 13
 quod plurimum apud me valuit. Erat urbs parva, 14
 et pauci in eâ homines; rex autem magnus ad eam
 accessit, cinxitque, et adversus eam ingentes turres
 exstruxit. Inventus vero in eo est vir pauper, idem- 15

time," and so מִתְּמִימָה in Ps. xxxi. 16, "My 'times' or 'destinies' are in thy hand," and in 1 Chron. xxix. 30, and Job xxiv. 1. Astrologers were called "those who understand the 'times' or 'destinies.'" Whether the period or crisis expressed by עֵת be one of prosperity or adversity is frequently determined only by the context. Instances of the first are Ps. lxxx. 16, and of the second Is. xiii. 22, and xxvii. 7. In the verse preceding the present as connected with עֵת it signifies "a crisis either of good or evil," and may be rendered by the general phrase "destiny" or "doom," and such must consequently be its meaning here, as it was also in iii. 17, where the nature of the crisis intended is equally undetermined by the context.

Observe the difference between מַצְרָה, "a net," used in this verse and מַצְרִים in verse 14, which is the plural of מַצָּד, and means "great towers," מַנְדָּלִים.

Ver. 13. "He here speaks of the effects and consequences " of wisdom in political affairs. He says the following instance " of the excellence and value of wisdom had had great weight

THE TWELFTH SECTION.

גָּמַדְתָּה רְאִיתִי חֲכֹמָה תְּחִתַּת הַשְׁמֶשׁ וַיְגַדֵּלָה הִיא 13
 אַלְיָה : עִיר קְטָנָה וְאַנְשִׁים בָּהּ מַעַט וּבָאַלְיָה מֶלֶךְ 14
 גַּדְוָל וּסְבָב אַתָּה וּבָנָה עֲלָיו מִצּוּרִים גַּדְוָלִים :
 וּמַצָּא בָּהּ אִישׁ מִסְפָּן חָלָם וּמַלְטָה-הָוּא אַתָּה-הָעִיר 15

"and influence with him, i. e. in leading him to make it a rule "to appoint wise men to head military expeditions, and not rich "and powerful fools." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. This piece of wisdom, or "this case of wisdom and its efficacy."

Ver. 14. "He pictures to us a small city, with but few "inhabitants, and over against it and round about it a powerful "king besieging it with a large force, the city being situated "in a low place, so that he could build towers 'over it,' i. e. "higher than it, and it seems doomed to be taken." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Mendlessohn appears to take עַלְיָה to mean "over" or "above" it. It may mean merely "against."

Ver. 15. "This indigent man had never been mentioned "by the people of the town before he delivered it by his wis- "dom." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The word זָכַר means either "thought of so as to recollect," or "made mention of." Perhaps the English word "notice," expresses it very well in this place.

The noun substantive agreeing with מַצָּא is either הַמְּלָךְ, the last person mentioned, or הַמְּזִיא understood. "Invenit

בְּחִכָּתָו וְאַדְמָ לֹא זֶכַר אֲתִ-הָאִישׁ הַמְּסֻבֵּן הַהְוָא :
 16 וְאָמַרְתִּי אָנִי טֹבָה חִכָּה מְגֻבָּרָה וְחִכָּתָ הַמְּסֻבֵּן
 17 בְּנוֹתָה וְדָבָרָיו אִינָם נְשָׂמָעִים : דָבָרִי חִכָּלִים בְּנָתָ
 18 נְשָׂמָעִים מְזֻעָקָת מְוֹשֵׁל בְּפִסְילִים : טֹבָה חִכָּה
 1 מְפָלִי קָרְבָּה וְחוֹטָא אַחֲרָ יָאָבֵד טֹבָה הַרְבָּה : זְבוּבִי

CHAP.
X.

inveniens," i. e. "inventus est." See Gen. xvi. 14, where "vocatus est puteus" is expressed by the words קָרָא לְבָאָר scilicet הַקָּרָא, &c. See also Is. ix. 5, Gen. xi. 9, xlvi. 1.

NOTE. Ver. 16. The whole of this and the following verses are the reflections of Solomon on the occurrence he has just been describing.

Ver. 17. "'Are not the counsels of wise men heard to "the tranquillizing and refreshing of the mind more than the "clamorous harangue of the overbearing ruler among fools? "And why will not men listen to them?'" Mendelssohn.

NOTE. Mendelssohn renders this verse, "the counsels of the wise are heard more for peace and quietness, &c." i. e. "have, when heard, a greater tendency to promote peace than the clamour, &c." However, it is more rigorously in accordance with the accents to take דְבָרִים בְּנָתָ as opposed to עֲזָקה, and to understand before מְנִ טֹבָם, supplying it from the טֹבָה in the last verse. "A wise man speaks calmly, without clamorous noise or violent gesticulation, and his counsel spoken and 'heard' quietly is better than that of the popular demagogue, who sways at his pleasure the minds of the foolish, and is vehement and noisy in his harangues." Such is probably the true meaning of מְוֹשֵׁל בְּפִסְילִים It has been variously in-

que sapiens qui sapientiâ suâ oppidum servavit; nec quisquam pauperem illum animadverterat (*vel* me-
16 morârat). Dicebam igitur, “Sapientia præstat for-
titudini quamquam sapientia pauperis contemnatur,
17 nec audiantur ejus consilia. Consilia sapientum tran-
quillè audita præstant clamori imperantis inter stul-
18 tos.” Præstat sapientia instrumentis bellicis; sed
C^{AP.}
X.
unus error multum bonum irritum reddet, (*vel* vi-
tiabit). Muscæ mortuæ singulæ quæque efficiunt

terpreted. Some take it to mean “the foolish ruler,” ac-
cording to the construction יְהוָה בֶּעָזֶר, “the Lord is among
my helpers,” i. e. “the Lord is my helper,” and יְהוָה בַּסְמָכִיּוֹן. Others render it “the prince of fools,” “stultissimus
stultorum.” Others translate the verse, “The words of wise men
are heard in quietness, i. e. by the sedate (and are attended to),
more than the clamorous harangue of a leader is by fools.”

Ver. 18. “‘It is true that this wisdom is better to defend
“and deliver than weapons of war; but sometimes when there
“exists one defect in a wise man or one good quality is lacking
“in him, much good is consequently spoilt.’” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. חֲסֵדֶת is generally a participle, and means “a
sinner;” but here the Rabbinical Commentators are inclined to
take it to be a noun abstract, signifying “defect,” and of the
form יוֹתֵר, (which is also a noun abstract, and signifies “ex-
cess” or “superiority”). This version agrees better with what
follows, where it is shewn by a metaphor that what is most ex-
cellent may be spoilt by a very slight admixture of what is bad.
I render אָבֶד, “may spoil.”

Ver. 1. “He says, ‘As dead flies, even each singly and
“separately, cause the ointment of the apothecary to stink and

ut foetide effervescat unguentum pigmentarii; *ita* pretiosum sapientiā et honore virum parva stultitia corrumpit. Cor sapientis est ei ad dextram, cor 2

"to effervesce, so even a little folly causes to be in bad odour a man who is highly valuable and respectable on account of his wisdom and honours, and spoils his good name." He had already drawn a comparison between good fame and good ointment in a former chapter." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. When a plural noun is used as here with a verb singular, the verb is predicated of each of the individuals of the subject separately, and we should insert before it "each one," or "each of them." Instances of this are, Exod. xxxi. 14, where it is said of the Sabbath, מְחַלֵּלָה מוֹת יוֹמֶת, "Each one who pollutes it shall surely be slain," and Prov. iii. 18, וַיִּתְמַכֵּה מִאֲשֶׁר (הַחֲכָמָה) מְאַשֵּׁר, "Blessed is each one who holds her fast." He means here to illustrate by a metaphor the mischief of a single error or defect in a wise counsellor by stating that a single dead fly may cause a pot of ointment to turn putrid, or at any rate that if a number of them cause this to happen each contributes to the result.

נִבְעַע is the Hiphil of נִבְעַע, which here bears a sense cognate to that of בִּינָה, "tumor," "pustula," in the Talmudic language, and אֲבֻבָּעָות, "blains," in the Biblical. The two words together may be rendered, "fœtide effervescere facit;" for when two verbs are thus placed in juxtaposition without an adverb or conjunction between them, the first is used adverbially. See Ps. xlvi. 5, רַכֵּב צָלָח, "Ride prosperously;" Ps. xlvi. 4, מִימְיוֹ יְהִמְמֵי, "Its waters may rage boisterously;" Hosea ix. 9, שְׁחַתִּי הָעָמִקִּי, "They have deeply corrupted;" Ps. cvi. 13, מִשְׁרָיו שְׁכָחוּ מַעֲשָׂיו, "They quickly forgat his works;" and Ps. lxxi. 20. And Jeremiah says, "Humble yourselves, sit

מִות יָבֹאֵשׁ יַבְעֵעַ שֶׁמֶן רֹקֵם יָקֵר מַחֲכָמָה מַכְבּוֹד
סְכָלוֹת מַעַט: לְבָבָ חֲכָם לִימִינֹו וְלְבָבָ פְּסִיל לִשְׁמָאלֹו: 2

down," for "sit down humbly." Or perhaps the word יַבְעֵעַ is used in the sense of "causing to hiss," for a putrid thing frequently bubbles up and produces a hissing sound. In this sense of "utterance of sound" we find נַבְעֵעַ in the Proverbs i. 23, רְוֵחֵי אֲבִיעָה לְכָם spiritum meum."

ירק with a kametz under the first letter is an adjective; but if there is a sheva there it means "honour," "glory." מַחֲכָמָה מַכְבּוֹד is an asyndeton. So in Ps. xxxii. 9, we have בְּסִים כְּפָרָד, "Like the horse *and* like the mule;" Ps. lii. 6, "Thou lovest all words of devouring *and* the tongue of lying;" Is. lxiii. 11, מְשָׁה עַמּוֹ, "Moses *and* his people;" and Habb. iii. 11, שְׁמַשׁ יְרֵחַ עַמּוֹ, "The sun *and* the moon stood still;" in all which places the conjunction copulative must be supplied. Here we have שְׁכָלוֹת, which in i. 17, was spelt with a ס, סְכָלוֹת.

Ver. 2. "Because the right is the hand which is always "most in readiness to do anything, he says a wise man's mind "is at his right hand, in order to express that it is always "ready for an occasion on which he may wish to employ it; "and he means that the sagacity of a wise man who foresees "consequences is recognizable in all his actions, and is constantly of service to him, as if it dwelt always in his right "hand, which is man's chief instrument of action; and that the "fool's mind is as though it were in his left hand, because he "is sluggish and backward in the performance of any good "work." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. This verse and that which follows it are evidently intended to express that seeing what great mischief may arise

3 וְגַם־בָּרֶךְ בְּשָׁהַפְּכָל הַלְּךָ לִבּוֹ חֲסֵר וַיֹּאמֶר לְפָלָ
 4 סָכָל הוּא : אַסְ-רָוֶת הַמּוֹשֵׁל תַּעֲלֵה אַלְיִד מָקוֹםְהָ
 5 אַל־תַּנְחַח בַּיּוֹתְרָה יְנִיחַ חַטָּאִים גְּרוּלִים : יְשַׁעַתְּ
 רָאִיתִי תַּחַת הַשְּׁמֶשׁ בְּשָׁגַנָּה שְׁזָא מַלְפִּנִי הַשְּׁלָלִים :
 6 גַּתָּן הַפְּכָל בְּמִרוּמִים רַבִּים וְעַשְׂרִים בְּשָׁפֵל יִשְׁבּוּ :

from one error on the part of a counsellor, the wise man will be constantly cautious and wary against committing mistakes.

The word נולך, which Mendlessohn uses here, and which I have rendered “consequences,” means literally that which is “produced” in the womb of time.

Ver. 3. “In all his business and occupation he shows that “his mind and knowledge fail him, and if he even be merely “walking by the way, he proclaims against himself and lets “every one know that he is a fool.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The Keri on ה “יתיר ה” is כְּשָׁהַפְּכָל; “the is redundant.”

The preterite seems to be used here as an aorist or frequentative tense.

חֲסֵר may be either a verbal adjective or the verb itself, which is thus pointed in the preterite. Whichever it be, its sense is here intransitive. “His mind is deficient,” or “his mind fails.” In this sense we find it in the future in Deut. xv. 8. It is generally used as a transitive verb with an accusative, and therefore with אתה.

Ver. 4. “If the wrath of the prince rise against thee, be “not in haste to leave thy place and fly out of his presence; “but rather keep thy post of office and do not exchange it for “another, for a submissive neck and a soft tongue will dismiss

3 stulti ad sinistram ejus. Etiam in viâ cum stultus ambulat excors est, et se stultum esse fatetur omnibus. Si ira principis contra te orta erit, locum tuum ne deseras; magna enim delicta dimittet, 5 (i. e. expiat) obsequium. Est malum quod sub sole vidi quasi hallucinationem apud principem exorientem. Evecta est stultitia ad excelsa loca multa, 6 dum manent nobiles in humili loco. Vidi servos equis

“and atone for great offences, and thou wilt thereby at length cause his displeasure to subside. מְרַפֵּא is from the root רָפָא, “and signifies submission and patience of temper. Mendlessohn.

NOTE. I have already had occasion to notice the words תִּפְנַח and תִּיְנַח, derivatives of a verb never found but in the Hiphil, which the Lexicographers unaccountably derive from נִנְחַת, whereas they would be more regularly derived from נִנְחָה. This verb is used in the sense “to let go,” “to dismiss.”

Ver. 5. “He says, ‘Sometimes, it is true, the public administration will be bad, because the ruler may do things contrary to truth and justice, (which seem like an oversight or mistake proceeding from him), without knowing how they will end.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Solomon speaks here of the errors of kings in the most extenuating terms, as if unwilling to allow that they can be guilty of anything worse than a mistake.

The regular form for נִצְׁחָה would be נִצְׁחָה; but to prevent too much stress being laid on the נ the ה drops out, and the vowel falls back to the צ so as still to distinguish the word as the feminine participle from נִצְׁחָה, the נ becoming נח instead of ה.

Ver. 6, 7. “Sometimes a king gives ear to the voice of youths and detractors, and raises folly higher and higher in

invectos, principes autem humi servorum ritu ambulantes. Qui fodit foveam in eam cadet, et qui 8 maceriem perrumpit mordebit eum anguis. Qui lapi- 9 des amovet lædetur illis; qui ligna findit iis peri- clitabitur, si hebetatum fuerit ferrum, neque ipse 10 aciem *eius* exacuerit, at majores vires intendere

“rank, while great men are degraded and occupy a subordinate place by his order. And sometimes these upstarts are allowed by the reigning monarch to ride on horses, which was not permitted in ancient times to any but men of rank and noble birth; while princes become poor men, and are forced to come down from their greatness and walk like slaves on the ground.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Ver. 6. He shews however in what follows the imprudence of slanderously aspersing persons in high office however ill chosen, and that he who tries to overthrow a corrupt administration may be so rash and uncompromising in the attempt, that all recovery and retracing his steps would be impracticable or useless.

נָתַן, “positus est,” “constitutus est,” as in Esth. vi. 8, and Dan. ii. 2.

סְכִל and שְׁפֵל are both abstract nouns, and mean respectively “folly” and “humiliation.”

Ver. 8. “He who digs a pit for others may fall into it; and he who pulls down a stone wall, a serpent such as lives in the cavities of walls may bite him.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The Chetib here has the anomaly of a dageshed letter after a shurek (מִלְאָכִים) in the word נַחַטְךָ; and the Keri accordingly substitutes a kibbutz (ךָ) for the shurek. The Targum explains it by the Chaldee קָמֹצָה, “a great pit,” a word evidently cognate with נַחַטְךָ, because נַ and פָּ are both palatals.

רָאִיתִי עֲבָדִים עַל-סּוֹסִים וְשָׁרִים הַלְּכִים בַּעֲבָדִים
עַל-הָאָרֶץ : חָפַר גַּפְתֵּן בּוֹ יָפַל וּפְרַצֵּן בָּרַךְ יִשְׁכַּנְוָה 8
נְחַשָּׁן : מַפְיעַ אֲבָנִים יַעֲצֵב בָּהֶם פָּזַע עֲצִים יִפְנַן 9
בָּם : אַסְ-קָהָה הַפְּרוֹל וְהָנוּ לְאַפְנִים קָלָקָל 10

The digging a pit and demolishing a fence here spoken of are highly figurative expressions for the undermining of an administration, which may be attended with great danger. Similar metaphors occur in the next two verses.

Ver. 9, 10. “ He who removes stones from their quarries “ or elsewhere may stumble over them and cause himself pain, “ and he who cleaves wood may be endangered thereby if he “ have neglected to sharpen the axe and has to use greater “ force, i. e. a workman will fare well or ill according to his “ skill in his trade, and if he be awkward and careless in it “ he will always suffer for it, but the skilful workman does his “ work with less trouble, and attains his object quickly with “ less risk.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Solomon is here very ænigmatic and poetic in his language. He introduces fresh metaphors to express the danger of attempts to overthrow, by slanderous aspersions, the authority of those in high station, and implies that in political affairs discretion is the best safeguard; that he who is rash and uncompromising in his reflections on those in office always endangers himself and may fail in attaining his object of removing those unworthy of power, but that whoever waits patiently and quits not his post will find obstacles gradually remove themselves from before him; and his prudence will attain superior success in political affairs, just as the skill of the careful artificer does in works of art.

וְוַחֲלִילִם יָגַבֵּר וַיַּתְּרוֹן הַכְּשִׁיר חֲכֶמֶת אִם־יִשְׁךְ

The futures in these two verses should be rendered into English by means of the auxiliary verb "may."

Ver. 9. In removing large stones the awkward workman may either stumble over them or make them fall upon himself.

The word יִסְכַּן is either "may be cut," or "may be endangered." For the former sense of it we have Biblical authority, (inasmuch as the cognate word שָׁפֵן is used for a "knife," or some sharp instrument in Prov. xxiii. 2, where Solomon says that a man might as well put a knife to his throat (שָׁפֵן בְּלֻעָה) as forget to demean himself aright in the presence of royalty); but for the latter only Talmudic, as where we have שָׁפֵן בֵּין שָׂוֹפֵת סְכָנָה, "culter in manu stulti periculum est."

These two verses (9 and 10) must be taken together, for there is no break in the sense between them. "He who cleaves logs of wood may be endangered by them, if the iron be blunt and he have to increase his force."

Ver. 10. קָרַח is the Pihel of קָרַח, "to be blunt." Buxtorf, desirous to reserve its transitive sense to this conjugation, renders it, "he has blunted;" but then where is the אַת before הַבְּרִיאָל, and to what purpose would have been the word הַפָּא which follows? There can be no doubt that the Kal and Pihel of קָרַח bear the same intransitive sense, as is also the case with those of כָּרַח, "to be faint."

קָלַקְלָל פְּנִים is literally, "has made smooth (polished) its surfaces," which is equivalent to "sharpening its edge;" because that is the method of whetting an edged tool.

הַכְּשִׁיר is a substantive from the Hiphil of כָּשַׁר, and means success in work, (observe that there is no dagesh in כָּשַׁר).

coactus fuerit; successus autem præstantia sapientiae
11 attinet. Si momorderit anguis, incantationi imme-
dicabilis *morsus* erit; itaque garrulo nulla est suc-

almost always denotes success in this book, as at ch. xi. 6,
“Whether this or that shall prosper, *בִּשְׁרָכֶם*.”

The phrase *וַיַּרְא* *הַכֹּשֵׁר חֲכָמָה* has a double meaning here. As referring to the artificer it means that “superiority of success is skill,” i. e. belongs to skill and is a consequence of it, because the skilful workman will not work with blunt tools and so run the risk of wounding himself; and as referring to the politician it means that the prudent man will succeed in attaining his political objects, because he will not adopt dangerous and obnoxious means in prosecuting them.

Ver. 11. “He says that if a serpent bite him who breaks down a wall, then it (the bite) will be without enchantment; there will be no cure for his wound; and then you will see that the slanderer has no advantage over the man who says, ‘My lips are my own, who is lord over me?’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. *בְּלֹא* is “without,” as in Numb. xxxv. 23, *בְּלֹא רְאוֹת*, “without seeing.” *לֹחֵשׁ*, “a thing muttered,” “a spell.” It becomes *לֹחֵשׁ* at the pause. We must understand before *בְּלֹא* a word signifying “the bite,” supplying it from *בְּשָׁרֶךָ*.

Probably *וַיַּרְא* *הַכֹּשֵׁר* in the preceding verse, viz. “superiority of success.” The garrulous slanderer cannot reckon with certainty on success like the prudent man; he has no advantage over other men in that respect. The Talmudic Rabbins, according to their usual practice, took this verse as an isolated maxim, and interpreted it, “If the serpent bite, its bite is incurable by a spell; and a babbler is no better (i. e. than the serpent).” This appears from the following passage. Bab. Talm. Erchin, Sect. iii. : *לֹחֵשׁ בְּלֹא יִשְׁׁזַׁק*

cessus præstantia. Verba oris sapientis sunt, “Cle- 12
mentiam *adhibe*,” labiorum autem stulti, “Inter-
mas illum.” Initium verborum oris ejus est stultitia, 13
et vocis ejus finis exitialis insania. Verbis quoque 14
abundat stultus; nescit tamen homo quid sit fu-
turum, et quid post illum sit quis illum certiorem

לעתיד לבא מתקבצות ובאות כל החיים אצל הנחש ואומרות לו:
אריו ודרס ואוכל, זאב טורף ואוכל, אתה מה הנאה יש לך :
אוומר להם, מה יתרכז לבעל־ההשון 12, i. e. “In the day of judgment
all the beasts will assemble and come to the serpent, and say
to him, ‘The lion tramples *on his prey* and eats it up; the
wolf rends *his prey* but also devours it; but thou, what plea-
sure hast thou *in biting?*’ Then *the serpent* will say to them,
‘The babbler is no better.’”

Ver. 12. “The wise man is not like the garrulous slan-
“derer; nearly all the words that proceed from his mouth are
“petitions for favour and clemency for every one, even for his
“enemies and persecutors; not so those which proceed from the
“lips of a fool; for he always says, ‘Destroy him,’ and there
“is no clemency or kindness in his heart.

“The word תַּבְלִיעַנָּךְ is the second person masculine and
“not the third feminine, and it is the expression made use of
“by the fool, i. e. the slanderer.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. The emphasis here is upon בְּסֵיל חֶכְמָה and חֶכְמָה. He
says it is the part of the wise man to plead for favour to
others, and of the fool to seek their ruin. This is all in con-
tinuation of the above remarks. We see here the perplexity
which may sometimes arise from the abruptness of the Hebrew
language together with its want of inverted commas to mark
quotations. This is peculiarly apparent in the account of the
judgment of Solomon, from which at first sight it would appear

הנְּחַשׁ בָּלוֹא-לְחֵשׁ וְאֵין יִתְרֹז לְבָעֵל הַלְּשׁוֹן : רַבְּרִי 12
 בִּיְחַכֵּם חָן וְשִׁפְטוֹת כְּסִיל תְּבִלְעָנוּ : תְּחִלָּת דָּבְרִי 13
 פִּיהוּ סְכָלּוֹת וְאַחֲרִית פִּיהוּ הַוְּלִילּוֹת רַעַת : וְהַפְּכַל 14
 יַרְבֶּה דָּבָרִים לְאִידְעָן הָאָדָם מִה-שִׁיחָה וְאֵשֶׁר יִהְיֶה

that he adjudged the child to the woman who wished it to be divided, because she had spoken last in the narration and the king says, “Give her the living child and in no wise slay it; she is the mother of it.” But he is in fact repeating the words of the other woman from recollection or minutes of proceedings and then pronounces at once, “She (the woman who used those words) is the mother of it.” That he is quoting her words, appears further from the unusual Hebrew word ילוד for “child,” which she uses and which the king repeats. This ingenious explication is due to Mr Bernard. It is probable that the word ילוד is a vulgarism which such a woman would use.

Ver. 13. “But if the beginning and primary effect of the “words he utters be folly tending to injure others, the end and “final consequence of them is sad infatuation tending to his “own hurt; for he shall not go unpunished.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. הַוְּלִילָת here is a feminine singular, similar in form to סְכָלּוֹת. It cannot but be suspected however that by some error ו has been written for ו which is found in place of it in the early chapters of this book, but then רַעַת would not agree with it as it now does.

Ver. 14. “He talks much and yet knows not what will “be on the morrow, and though it be already close behind him, “he does not perceive it and there is none to tell him of it.” Mendlessohn.

15 מַאֲחֶרְיוֹ מִי יָגֵד לוֹ : עַמְלֵה הַכְּסִילִים תִּגְעַנוּ אֲשֶׁר
לֹא-יָדַע לְלִכְתָּא-עִיר :

NOTE. He had said in the preceding verse that when the fool utters his thoughtless slanders he little thinks that he will eventually prove to have been acting the part of a madman and endangering himself, if not involving himself in certain ruin, "that the consequence of his speeches is that of fatal madness;" and he now goes on to say that the fool makes free with his tongue, though no one knows what may be the consequence of his slanders to him, and there is none who can warn him as to what will be his fate. Mendelssohn appears to make **הָאָדָם** mean "the man," i. e. the man who was last mentioned, "the fool." This however is inadmissible, as in that case we should have had **הָאָדָם**, or **הָאָדָם**. **הָאָדָם** invariably means either "men in general," "mankind," or "any man," "any body," as appears from many passages of this book; see viii. 17, "Inasmuch as man (**הָאָדָם**) labours to find it out and cannot," and especially the beginning of the same verse, where there is no previous mention of any man to whom **הָאָדָם** can refer, "So I contemplated the whole work of God, for man cannot find out the part of it, &c." As an instance of the second use, see vi. 12, "For who knows what is good for a man (**לְאָדָם**) for life? since who can tell him what may be awaiting him?" So here the sense must be, "no man knows what may be about to happen in consequence of the fool's garrulity." The Hebrews constantly use the definite where we should use the indefinite article; see Note to ver. 18, and **הַכְּסִילִים** in ver. 15.

The last six words of this verse are nearly the same as those at the end of chapter vi. In both places, "that which is behind him" seems to mean "a calamity ready to fall upon him."

15 faciet? Stultorum labor unumquemque *eorum* defatigabit, quia est *quasi* nescius ad urbem pervenire.

Ver. 15. "He compares a fool who likes to meddle in things too great and wonderful for him while he is ignorant of those things which every body sees and knows, to a man who wants to reach a city, and does not know the way, and so wearies himself without attaining his wish." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The Rabbinic commentators notice that the word עַמְלָה is masculine and therefore cannot agree with the verb. Either therefore some word qualifying עַמְלָה must have dropt out, or it may be a solitary instance of that word being feminine, as Aben Ezra observes is the case with בְּבָדָר, which he says is always masculine except in the passage in the end of Genesis, "With their assembly mine honour shall not be united," אל-תִּתְחַדֵּךְ בְּבָדָר. Here however תִּתְחַדֵּךְ may be the second person masculine, as well as the third feminine; (which cannot be the case with תִּתְיַעֲטֶךְ); and the rendering will then be, "With their assembly be not thou united, my honour."

Ver. 15 cannot be construed, "The labour of fools (i. e. profitless toil) will weary out him who does not know his way to a city he wants to reach," because the antecedent of a pronominal affix in Hebrew always precedes the verb which has the affix, beside that the verse would then convey a mere truism. The first clause must mean either "The labour of fools will weary out each of them (i. e. of the fools)," or "Profitless labour will weary him (i. e. the slanderer spoken of above); and the second clause either, "*like* one who knew not his way to a city *when he wanted to reach it*," (if נִשְׁרָא mean "who"); or "since *he is as if* he knew not his way, &c." (if נִשְׁרָא mean "since"). We had יִצְרָא followed by an infinitive with the prefix נ at Eccles. iv. 13. The phrase לֹא-יִדְעַ לְלֹכֶת is like the Latin "nescit ire."

SECTIO DECIMA TERTIA.

Væ tibi, terra, quod rex tuus puerilis sit, et 16
 principes tui mane comedant. Prosperitas est tua, 17
 terra, quod rex tuus nobilis sit, et principes tui
 justo tempore epulentur ad se roborandum et non

Ver. 16. “Woe to thee when thy king is childish and
 “neglects to administer the affairs of the kingdom, and thy
 “princes feast in the morning, before they have transacted
 “the public business, contrary to the injunction of Scripture,
 “‘Administer justice in the morning.’” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The literal rendering would be, “Woe to thee, O land, in case that thy king should be childish,” i. e. it would be a woe, a great misfortune for thee that this should happen; and so with regard to the וְ in the next verse, “It would be thy happiness, &c.”

Ver. 17. “When thy king is a son of nobles,’ means, “when he acts the part of great princes.’ בָּנִי הַרְבִּים as applied to a prince is the opposite of בָּנִי עַל, ‘And thy princes eat in due season,’ (i. e. after they have finished their day’s work of administering justice in the country), and only “for necessity, in order that their own vigour and strength “may contribute to the general good, not for the sake of “luxurious indulgence in wine and dainties.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The singular of the word אֲשֶׁר, viz. אֲשֶׁר, is very rarely placed, as the plural is, in construction with another substantive, or with a pronominal affix united to it. Of the latter case there is a single instance in Scripture, Prov. xxix. 18,

THE THIRTEENTH SECTION.

אִיְלָךְ אֶרֶץ שְׁמַלְכָךְ נָעֵר וְשָׁרֵיךְ בְּפֶקֶר יָאָבָלו : 16
 אֲשֶׁרֶיךְ אֶרֶץ שְׁמַלְכָךְ בְּזָהָוֹרִים וְשָׁרֵיךְ בְּעֵת יָאָבָלו 17

אֲשֶׁרֶה, which is the singular with the pronominal affix of the third person singular attached to it. In the same way **לְ** and **תְּ** when joined with pronominal affixes and **אֶחָד** in all its combinations take a plural form. It is true that the construct form of the plural is **אֲשֶׁרֶי**, but when **אֲשֶׁרֶם** is coupled with affixes the two first vowels would continue unaltered if this word followed the regular form, and we should have here **אֲשֶׁרֶיךְ**, so that but for the **וְ** which marks the word **אֲשֶׁרֶיךְ** to be really formed from the plural, we might have taken it to be derived from the singular; this however would have given **אֲשֶׁרֶה** like **אֲשֶׁרֶיךְ**. Similarly we find Ps. cxxviii. 2, **אֲשֶׁרֶיךְ**; Prov. xxix. 18, **אֲשֶׁרֶיו**; Is. xxxii. 20, **אֲשֶׁרֶיכֶם**; which are all formed from the plural of **אֲשֶׁר**.

The literal rendering of the first words of this verse is, “Blessings are thine, O land, provided that thy king be, &c.”

בְּזָהָוֹרִים is clearly opposed to **נָעֵר** in the preceding verse, the latter denoting unworthiness, the former worthiness of high station. The Rabbinic commentators say that “**הָוֹרִים** either is equivalent to **בְּגָלִיל חִירּוֹת**, i.e. (in the Talmudic language) ‘those possessed of freedom,’ ‘freemen,’ or means ‘fine white linen,’ and hence ‘those who wear white linen,’ as great princes are called

18 בְּגִבּוֹרָה וְלֹא בְּשַׁתִּי : בְּעֵצֶלֶתִים יִמְךָ הַמְּקֻרָה
19 וּבְשִׁפְלוֹת יָדִים יַדְלֵף הַבַּיִת : לְשֹׁחֵךְ עֲשִׂים לְחַם

in Arabic חֹר “بلون.” The derivation of the word however is in all probability the Arabic حَرْ “liber,” “ingenuus,” and neither of those mentioned by the Rabbinists. It is always used in the plural; as in 1 Kings xxi. 8, 11, Is. xxxiv. 12, and בְּנֵי-חֹרִים is equivalent to חֹר, just as we have in Joel iv. 6, בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל, “filii Graecorum,” for γῆνες Ἀχαιῶν.

בְּ is used in בְּגִבּוֹרָה and בְּשַׁתִּי in the sense “propter.” We find it in a similar sense at Ps. vii. 7, “because of” or “on account of the fury of my adversaries;” and Jon. i. 14, “Let us not perish בְּנֶפֶשׁ הָאִישׁ i. e. for the life of this man.”

Ver. 18. “When a man is indolent, and neglects to repair “a small breach in the roof of a house, the beams will at last “fall down; and if the master of a house hang down his “hands or fold them on his bosom, the rain will at last pour “through into the midst of his house. He speaks here meta-“phorically of a king and his princes, and means to say that “if they employ themselves only in eating and drinking lux-“uriously, and sluggishly neglect the affairs of the state, the “kingdom will presently come to nought, like a house which “gradually falls into ruins in consequence of the indolence of “its owner.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Aben Ezra says that עֵצֶלֶתִים is in the dual number because it refers to the two hands; so that בְּעֵצֶלֶתִים would mean “when both the hands are sluggish.” The singular number is עֵצֶלָה, “indolence,” which occurs in the Proverbs. יִמְךָ is the apocopated future Niphal of מַקֵּד. It means, “will sink down

18 ad compotandum. Per pigritiam collabetur contigatio, et per manuum dimissionem perpluet domus,
 19 in irrisione illorum qui parant cibos, vinumque quod vivos (*vel vitam*) hilarat, et pecuniam quæ

of itself." We have here in the word **הַבִּית** an instance of what is very common in Hebrew, the use of the definite article where in English we should use the indefinite. See Note to ver. 14.

NOTE. Ver. 19. Mendlessohn here makes **םְשִׁיָּה** agree with **שָׁרִים** in the last verse but two, and, considering those two to be in a parenthesis, renders this verse, "Who make "great entertainments, not to strengthen the body, but for "laughter and rejoicing; (**לִחְמָה** meaning a 'banquet,' as well "as 'bread;' vide Dan. v. 1) and their wine cheers the people "who carouse with them; and so it is clear that money will "answer every purpose with them;" "and accordingly," says Mendlessohn, "they constantly cry out as it were 'Give, give,' and drain the resources of the country."

But though all the commentators agree with Mendlessohn, (except indeed Yarchi and Aben Ezra who propose a somewhat far-fetched and improbable interpretation, for which see Rosenmuller at this verse); it must be allowed that to suppose a parenthesis of the two last verses, 17 and 18, which are the antithesis to the preceding one, is a very unsatisfactory method of explanation, because, the word **שָׁרִים** occurring in verse 17, as well as in 16, if **םְשִׁיָּה** agree with this word at all it must necessarily refer to it where it last occurs, and therefore not as used in verse 16, so that there can be a parenthesis only of the last verse (18). If this however be the case, verses 19 and 17 form together a sentence whose clauses are directly contradictory to each other, and which therefore is absolute nonsense. I therefore venture to propose, what I believe is an

omnia suppeditat. Ne in cogitatione quidem tuâ regi 20
maledicas, neque in penetralibus quidem cubiculi
tui nobili viro obloquaris, namque avis cœli deve-
het vocem, et rem nunciabit aligera.

entirely new suggestion, to render this verse as a continuation of the preceding one, thus, “Through remissness of the hands a house drops through, to the derision of those who acquire by *industry* bread, and wine that cheers people, and money that furnishes every thing.” My arguments for it are these. עַשׂ is often used in the sense “to acquire,” vide Gen. xxxi. 1, xii. 5, Deut. viii. 17, 18. שׂחֹק retains the same form when in a state of construction; and it always means “derision,” or “a laughing-stock,” as in Lament. iü. 14, שׂחָקִיתִי, “I became a laughing-stock,” “ludibrium fiebam.” The omission of אֲשֶׁר as it is here omitted before the verbs יִשְׁמַח and עָנֵה, is a construction not at all uncommon, see Ps. lxxvii. 6, “In order that a subsequent generation, children *that* should be born, (בָּנִים יִלְדִּין), might know these things; that they might arise and tell them to their children;” Gen. xv. 13, בָּאָרֶץ לֹא לְחַם, “In a land *which* belongs not to them;” Ps. lxxxiv. 6, and Ps. lxxi. 18, “Till I have declared thy goodness to every one *that* is to come,” לְכָל־יִבּוֹא; and a still more remarkable parallel passage in Ps. civ. 14, 15, of a part of which the present passage seems almost a quotation, לְהַזְׁכִּיא לְחַם מִן־הָאָרֶץ וְיָם יִשְׁפַּח לִבְבֵ-אָנוֹשׁ וּכוּ “To bring food out of the ground, and wine *that* cheers the heart of man.” חַיִם may be either “life,” or “the living,” “people.” Of course on the above rendering הַכְּבָד must be in the accusative case; אֲתָּה is generally prefixed to this case when it is in “a definite” state, but is also not unfrequently omitted,

וַיֹּוֶן יִשְׁפַּח חַיִּים וְהַבָּסָף יַעֲנֵה אֶת-הַבָּל: גַּם בְּמִדְעָךְ 20
 מֶלֶךְ אֶל-תַּקְלֵל וּבְחֶרְבִּי מִשְׁבְּכָךְ אֶל-תַּקְלֵל עַשְׂרֵה
 בְּעֹז הַשְּׁמִינִים יוֹלֵךְ אֶת-הַקּוֹל וּבֶעֱלָה הַפְּנִפְנִים יַגְעֵיד
 רַבָּר :

(vide Hurwitz). Perhaps it is omitted here for euphony on account of the אֶת-הַדָּבָר which follows almost immediately and because the construction made it so obvious that this must be in the accusative, as well as לְחַם and לְנַשְׁׁוֹן.

I have already discussed the meaning of the word יענה at chap. v. 19, on the supposition that it is in the Kal in the present verse, when it will mean “grants,” or “supplies.” If we take it to be in the Hiphil, (as it may be), it must mean, “gives the means of procuring.” The הַבָּל may be either “every thing,” or “both,” i. e. “both bread and wine.”

Observe that שׁוֹזֵק may be the infinitive, and we then construe, “So as for those to deride who acquire bread, &c.” and the sense is the same.

The rendering which I have adopted exhibits in this passage that repetition of an antithesis which several times occurs in this book and is particularly remarkable in the two last chapters of it; for Solomon in the two first verses of this Section contrasts the state of a country under a slothful and an active administration, and in the two verses which follow, as I have translated them, the ruin consequent on indolence in a family with the advantage resulting from diligence.

Ver. 20. “He addresses him who lives under the government of a ruler and says, ‘If thou perceivest that the king is childish, and the princes eat in the morning, restrain thyself from talking about it; and even in thy thoughts do not

THE FOURTEENTH SECTION.

CHAP.
XI.

1

שָׁלַח לְחִמֵּךְ עַל־פָּנֶיךָ הַמִּים פִּי־בָּרְבָּב הַיָּמִים

“blame or reprobate the king’s conduct; nor speak lightly of “his princes in the most secret place. Guard thy mouth and “keep watch over thy tongue, and say not, I am in my “chamber, who can hear me? for the bird of the sky’ (here “he speaks metaphorically), ‘that sits in thy window and hears “thy words, and the winged fowl may report it to the men of “power, so that they may hate and destroy thee.’ He means, “‘Thou canst not be sufficiently on thy guard in this matter.’ “This repetition seems to indicate that the passage is written “in poetry.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. בְּחִדְרֵי מְשֻׁבְּכָה is literally “in the chambers of thy bed.” The Keri on הַכְּנָפָם is הַיְתֵר ה “” is redundant.”

Ver. 1, 2. “According to the plain interpretation of this “passage, he seems to be here addressing himself to merchants, “and advising them to trade to a distance, even from one end “of the world to the other; as if he would say, ‘Let them not “be afraid to send their substance to those at a distance, or to “transport it across the sea in trading vessels; for in the course “of many days they will by this means gain much profit and “advantage.’ He calls all mercantile occupation by the general “phrase of ‘going down to the sea.’ For it was he who began “the practice of sending ships to Ophir and Tarshish along with “those of Hiram. And once every three years they brought

SECTIO DECIMA QUARTA.

Mitte opes tuas super faciem aquarum; nam post multorum dierum intervallum recipies eas.

" thence silver and gold and other kinds of merchandize, as is stated in Scripture. And it should seem that the king is seeking here to stir up and incite the minds of his servants and his people to do as he had done, in order that they might become rich and their wealth might be increased. In the second verse, according to its simple interpretation and its connexion with the preceding one, he seems to be advising a merchant not to invest all his property in one mercantile speculation, or "to stow all his goods in one ship, but agreeably to prudence to divide it among seven or eight; and then if he lose by one he may make profit by another; for he cannot tell what accidents may happen in the world; and it is probable that he says 'seven or eight' in order to dissuade his hearers from paying attention to those diviners who select a certain number as likely to bring good luck, and reject another under the idea that it will be unlucky, and that he says this implying, 'Commit portions of thy substance to seven or to eight vessels indifferently, and addict not thyself to divination by numbers.' " Mendlesohn.

NOTE. The word **תָּהַw** has been incorrectly rendered in this passage "cast," or "scatter," and by the Latin translators "emitte," "projice." This verb, whether in Kal or Pihel, invariably means "to send," except as applied to the discharge of missiles from a bow or an engine, where its use is clearly tech-

Septem vel octo *navibus* singulis partem impone; 2

nical. The sense of “casting” or “scattering” is appropriated to the verb קָלַשׁ, which is always used in the Hiphil, as we find it in iii. 5, “A time to keep, and a time to throw away,” לְהַשְׁלֹךְ וְעַתִּים. But if the passage be rendered as Lowth and nearly all the Rabbinic commentators have explained it, “Scatter thy seed-corn where there is no hope of a harvest;” i. e. “bestow thy benefits and bounty on those by whom thou canst not hope to be repaid,” the word קָלַשׁ ought clearly to imply “scattering,” and that free and liberal distribution of charity which Christ recommends where he says, “When thou givest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind; for they cannot recompense thee; but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.” Again, the motive here held out for sending out our bread, i. e. our livelihood or substance on the waters, is that we shall “find it again;” i. e. that same bread or substance, and recover it, as it implied, with profit upon it. Now it could not be intended that this should be our motive in liberality to the poor; for Christ says, “Call not thy rich neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee,” but it is at the resurrection that he tells us we are to look for the reward of it; and we cannot suppose that that reward is to consist in “bread,” or “substance.”

The second verse still more clearly indicates the correctness of Mendlessohn’s interpretation.

In the first place it is clear that through the whole of the context Solomon is merely giving precepts of worldly wisdom. For it has been shewn that such is the case in a number of verses preceding; and as to the following verses to the end of this Section, the only conclusion drawn from them by the author himself is, “In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening

תְּמִצְאָנוּ : תַּזְהַלֵּק לְשָׁבֻעָה וְגַם לְשֶׁמֹּנָה בַּי לֹא 2

lay not down thy hand, &c." Accordingly it would be more consistent that in these two verses he should be merely recommending the disposal of our goods into more vessels than one, in order that we may not have our all staked in one freight and so be as little as possible exposed to loss from accidents, than that he should have interrupted the general style and tenour of his discourse to advise us to lay up treasure for the life to come by liberality to the poor in this.

In the next place the exhortation conveyed in this verse to commit portions of our substance to seven or eight individuals is quite inconsistent with that to exercise a large and free liberality to the poor conveyed by Lowth's rendering of the former verse. It is this species of liberality which is spoken of by Christ as to be recompensed at the resurrection, not the committal of our substance to a few individuals after the manner of the unjust steward who made himself friends with "the mammon of unrighteousness." Besides, why should the number seven be fixed upon? It is perfectly inappropriate as employed in this place except inasmuch as it is a sacred number, which conveyed a certain charm or spell with its use, and might therefore be fixed upon by a superstitious merchant as the number of his ships, or even by a believer in spells as that of the friends to whom he would entrust his property, but on no ground whatever by a charitable person as the number of the poor recipients of his bounty. But the opinion that the entrusting of portions of our substance to several friends in order to increase its security is here recommended, is inadmissible even on Lowth's rendering of the first verse, and may be set aside at once; and consequently the mention of these particular numbers goes entirely to support Mendlessohn's interpretation, and no other.

תַּלְעַ מִהִתָּה רֵעה עַל־הָאָרֶץ : אֲסִימְלָאוּ הַעֲבָדִים
נָשָׂם עַל־הָאָרֶץ יְלִיקוּ וְאַסְיְפֹל עַז בְּרוּם וְאַס

Finally, the motive held out to compliance with the exhortation in this verse is, “For thou knowest not what evil may happen in the world.” Now if it had been intended here to encourage us to exercise liberality to the poor, surely we should have been reminded of the recompense of a future state, to which there are so many allusions in this book, rather than of the uncertainty of abiding prosperity in this life, (which in itself would have been a motive to securing friends among the great and rich, and not among the poor); and yet this is all that those words can reasonably be supposed to mean; for there can be no doubt that if Solomon had intended by the second clause of verse (2) to say, “for thou knowest not what losses may befall thee in this world, *and therefore thou hadst best lay up treasure for another, i. e. by liberality to the poor,*” he would have said this expressly, and not merely have implied it. For the idea which it would then be left for the reader to supply would not suggest itself to us so readily as it does unless we were familiar with several passages of the New Testament, as for instance that in which Christ exhorts his disciples to make themselves friends in heaven by a due use of worldly wealth in order that when they should have to leave it they might be admitted to everlasting and heavenly habitations.

This is in fact a remarkable instance of the agreement of Jewish and Christian commentators in the attempt to extort the same far-fetched sense from a passage of Scripture, the method of *דרש*, or recondite interpretation on the one side, and that of fancifully devising parallelisms where they do not exist between the Old Testament and the New on the other, having led them both to the same conclusion.

3 nescis enim quid mali futurum sit in terris. Si plenæ fuerint nubes pluviam in terram effundent; ac si ceciderit lignum in austrum sive in septentrio-

הַלְּתָר is put in the singular number distributively. The sense is, “Give a portion, a share, to each of seven or eight vessels.”

Ver. 3, 4. “He proceeds to speak of those diviners, who “observe the clouds, and conjure up forms and shapes in them, “and by means of these think to ascertain and prognosticate “at the outset of their proceedings whether they will prosper “or not, or who notice from what quarter the wind blows, and “consult its advice as it were as to the direction in which they “shall sow, or the course they ought to adopt in their mer-“cantile or military operations so that they may prosper; as “though when the wind sets the clouds in motion it thereby gave “them in answer an intimation that they ought to direct their “operations towards the quarter whither it is going, and if “the clouds happen to be stationary and therefore the wind at “rest, this were a sign to them that they too ought to suspend “the operations which they were about to enter upon. And “such was the practice in those days, as we find from the “passage, ‘enquiring of his piece of wood; and his staff will “tell him,’ לְבָשֵׂר וּמַקְלֵה יִגְדֹּל אֶלְעָשָׂה; that is, such a person “was in the habit of throwing his walking-stick into the air, or “shooting an arrow upwards, and observing by its fall the “direction in which the wind had carried it, or whether it fell “down to him again if there was no wind, and then regard-“ing it as a sign. Vide Ezek. xxi. 21, ‘The king of “Babylon stood at the parting of the way (trivium) to use “divination; he made his arrows bright,’ &c. in allusion to the “method of divination by arrows. With respect to these per-“sons the Preacher says that we must not attend to the vanities

nem quo loco ceciderit ibidem manebit. Qui ven- 4
tum observat forsitan non serat, et qui nubes spectat
forsitan non metat. Quemadmodum venti cursum 5

" of diviners; for that such ideas have no reality in them, and
" such practices will give us no true information about the future
" in the affairs of men; but that if the clouds are full of rain,
" all we can know from them is that they will pour it out on
" the ground; and similarly the fall of the staff whether north-
" ward or southward cannot afford any sign or intimation. It
" is certain that, wherever the piece of wood falls, there it will
" lie; this is all we can know from its falling; but by its
" falling it gives us no information with regard to any matter
" further than this either for good or harm. Another Rabbi
" whom I have consulted explains this passage differently. He
" connects it with the last clause of the preceding verse, and
" says, it means, 'You must not imagine that there is danger
" only in marine trade; on dry land too you cannot tell what
" evil or misfortune may happen. If you are sowing your field,
" you cannot tell whether the clouds may be full of rain, and
" interrupt your work by pouring it down; or whether a
" stormy wind may arise, and a great tree be blown down;
" and then he who is walking by the way cannot tell whether
" it will fall northward or southward, and all his alarm and
" anxiety will be useless, for the tree will lie in the place
" where it falls. For these reasons a man should not indulge in
" fruitless and causeless apprehension.' Other Rabbins have ex-
" plained it still differently. But with none of the interpretations
" have I been able to reconcile the position in this verse of the
" accents which denote pauses; for the word נִזְקֵן ought to have
" had the athnack, and the word בָּזֶקְפָּה the zakeph, in order
" for each predicate to be connected with its respective subject
" according to the general rule. But agreeably with the pauses of

בְּצִפּוֹן מָקוֹם שִׁיפּוֹל הַעַז שֵׁם יְהוָה : שְׁמַר רֹוח 4
 לֹא יָרֶע וְרָאָה בְּעֵבִים לֹא יִקְצֹר : בְּאַשְׁר אַיִלָּה 5

"the accents as they stand in our text it is requisite that the 'latter subject, viz. 'the place where it falls,' should refer to 'the 'cloud's being full of water,' as well as to the 'falling of the 'tree;' and this is not in accordance with any of the methods "of interpretation which I have noticed. In the next verse he "proceeds to dissuade from attention to the same method of "divination, observing that he who watches the wind, and does "not choose to sow until it comes from a particular quarter, will "sometimes wait in vain for it to do so, and consequently never "sow or not till it is too late; and that similarly he who gazes "at the clouds and consults the forms which he observes in "them, will sometimes reap no harvest." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. Ver. 3. As יְהִי is formed from הִיא with the apocopation of the final ה, so יְהִיא is formed from הִיא, the א not admitting of apocopation. The form corresponding with יְהִיה would be יְהִיא. The meaning of these two verbs is the same.

Mendelssohn even here does not venture to suggest an alteration of the accents, though he implies that he is unable to suggest any sense for the passage in accordance with them. His meaning above where he says that the accents in this verse do not answer to the obviously true correspondence of subjects and predicates in it, is that if we stop the verse agreeably with the accents it will be on this wise, "If the clouds are full (and) they pour down rain on the ground and if the rod fall northward or southward, in the place where the rod falls there it will lie."

Ver. 4. יָרֶע and יִקְצֹר are clearly in the potential mood.

Ver. 5. "This is an inverted form of expression, and as

יְוָדַע מֵהַדָּרֶךְ הָרוֹחַ בְּעִצְמִים בְּבֶטֶן הַמְלָאָה בְּכָה
לֹא תְרַע אֶת-מְעַשָּׂה הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה אֶת-הַפְּלָל:
6 בְּבָקָר וּבָרָע אֶת-זִרְעָךְ וְלֹעֲבָב אֶל-תִּנְחַדְךְ בְּ אַיִלְךְ
יְוָדַע אֵי זֶה יְבָשֵׂר הַזֶּה אָזְהָה וְאַסְ-שְׁנִיהָם בְּאַחֲרֵי-
טוֹבִים :

" such must be interpreted backwards from the end to the beginning ; and its meaning then is, ' Thou canst know nothing " of any one of the purposes of God before it is developed " and has actually appeared in existence, just as thou knowest " no more about the course of the wind than thou dost about the " fetus and its formation in the womb of the mother.' " (At the same time then he asserts that the degree of our acquaintance with the course of the wind, and therefore of our power to prognosticate by means of it, is the same as that of our acquaintance with the progress of a formation which nature has concealed from us, and states that we can know no more of any of the purposes of God beforehand than we do about either of these subjects.) " The order of the two members of the sentence introduced by the adverbs **בְּכָה** and **בְּאַשְׁר** respectively is inverted in the same way as the order has been in " the phrases ' **בְּאָרֶץ מִצְרָיִם** ' The land of Egypt was " like the garden of the Lord ; ' **בְּשִׁפְחָה בְּגַבְرָתָה** ' The mis- tress shall be as her maid ; ' **בְּקָנוֹתָה בְּמַזְכָּר** ' The seller shall " be as the buyer ; ' these particles being used to compare " sometimes the first with the second, and sometimes the second " with the first. Yarchi ably connects this passage with the preceding verses thus ; he says, ' If it were possible that thou " shouldest be acquainted with the laws of motion of the atmosphere of the world, so as to be sure in what direction it ought

ignoras sicut conformatio[n]es inclusas in utero gravidae; ita Dei qui facit omnia non opus intelligis.
 6 Mane semen tuum semina; et vespere ne remittas manum tuam; nescis enim utrum, hocce an illud, magis fuerit prosperum, sive utrumque aequ[e] bonum sit.

"to move agreeably to them at the time of thy augury, and "thou shouldest find that its motion were then contrary to the "laws of nature, in that case it might perhaps be at least a sort "of sign to thee; but if thou dost not comprehend the nature of "its course, what sign can it possibly furnish thee in thy divi- "nations? perhaps its then direction may be exactly that of "nature." Yarchi interprets the word **אַמְּנָנִים** in this place as "derived from **אָזֶן** in the phrase **יְצַרֵּעַ עַצְמָם**, 'closing his eyes,' "and therefore meaning 'the inclosures in the womb.'" Mendlessohn.

NOTE. We have already had the word **שָׁׁבֵת** in the sense "to appoint," and here again **שָׁׁבֵת** must mean "appointment," "purpose."

Ver. 6. "He means, 'Do not give attention to the signs "of divination and augury; but do thy own business in every "respect; sow thy seed in the morning, and in the evening let "not thy hand be remiss. Be not indolently slack in doing "thy duty; and if thou be not prosperous to-day, perhaps thou "wilt be so to-morrow, and if thou lose in the morning perhaps "thou mayest gain in the evening.'" Mendlessohn.

NOTE. When **וְ** is prefixed to the pronoun **תֱּ**, it gives it the sense of an interrogative pronoun, "which," "whether of two," (**הַזֶּה אֲוֹתָה**, "this or that"). We find it united with other pronouns and adverbs, and similarly modifying their signification.

SECTIO DECIMA QUINTA.

Suave quoque lumen est, et bonum oculis est 7
videre solem; etsi enim multos annos vivat homo, 8
omnibus illis læetur; at simul recordetur tenebra-
rum dies, quod forsitan multi futuri sint, et irritum
quocunque *ei* obvenerit (*vel* “et quocunque præ-

Ver. 7. “‘The light also, &c.’ After exhorting to diligence in mercantile and agricultural employments, he proceeds “to encourage men to tranquillity and cheerfulness of heart. “He says, ‘The light too is sweet, and it is a good thing to “look at the sun when a man is reposing after his work is “done.’” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. Solomon means that while industry is very commendable, tranquil enjoyment of life and the beauties of creation is also a good thing.

Ver. 8, 9. “‘For though a man’s life be long, it is proper “that he should be cheerful through the whole of it; but that in “the midst of his cheerfulness he should bear in mind that the “days of distress and adversity may be many, and that then “all that has past and happened to him would be in vain; for “in the days of adversity man does not remember the days of “past prosperity.’ He then repeats this advice with the accompanying warning. He says, ‘Rejoice, (be cheerful,) O “youth, in thy childhood;’ know that melancholy and moroseness is not the service of God, but that on the contrary it is “one of the commandments of God to us to receive our bless-

THE FIFTEENTH SECTION.

וְמִתּוֹךְ הָאָזֶן וְטוֹב לְעֵינֵים לְרֹאֹת אֶת-הַשְׁמֵשׁ : 7
 בְּאַס-שְׁנִים כַּרְבָּה יְחִיָּה הָאָדָם בְּכָלָם יִשְׂמַח 8
 וַיַּעֲפֵר אֶת-זִימִי הַחַשְׁךְ כִּי-הַרְבָּה יְהִי בְּלִשְׁבָּא הַבָּל :

" ings from him in gladness and cheerfulness of heart; as 'the " friend' says to 'king Hakoozar,' (2nd Dialogue, chap. 20.) " 'The holy law has not commanded us to be Pharisees,' " (this name פְּרוֹשׁ was at first used with praise, and applied to every sober man who separates himself from the grosser pleasures of the world; and the training oneself in such a manner of life was called פְּרִישָׁת. But afterwards those who hypocritically shewed themselves too punctilious in their abstemiousness and fell into the grossest self-conceit were called פְּרוֹשִׁים, "Puritans," as a stigmatizing epithet. See Bernard's Maimonides), " 'but to " pursue the middle path, and to give its just portion to each " of the powers of the body and mind, without excess or super- " fluity; for it is impossible for the portion allotted to one " faculty to be excessive without that allotted to another portion " becoming consequently defective. Thus he who inclines be- " yond the bound of moderation to the faculty of carnal desire " must diminish and encroach upon the faculty of reflection and " observation, and vice versâ; and he who inclines in excess to " the love of power and victory will lessen the efficiency of some " other faculty; and much fasting is not necessarily doing God

וְשָׁמַח בָּחוֹר בִּילְדוֹתֶךָ וַיִּטְבֹּךְ לְפָנֶיךָ בִּימֵי בְּחוֹרוֹתֶיךָ
וְהָלַךְ בְּדָרְכֶיךָ לְפָנֶיךָ וּבְמִרְאֵי עִינָּיךָ וְלֹעֲגָלְךָ בְּיַעֲלָמָךָ

“ service in a man whose bodily appetites are feeble, and whose “ powers are debilitated and frame emaciated. But it is proper “ for such a man to indulge and cherish his corporeal frame. “ Nor again is it serving God to reject wealth, provided that “ wealth come to a man in a right way, without excessive “ anxiety and toil on his part, and without his having been led “ to negligence of learning, wisdom, and good works in the “ acquirement of it. Indeed for one who has the additional “ expense of providing for children, and whose purpose it is to “ spend his wealth for God, the acquisition of property is most “ proper. The sum and substance of this matter is that thy “ duty is made up of fear, love, and cheerfulness; and in each “ of these states of feeling thou shouldest approach thy God; “ nor is the humiliation and abstinence practised on days of “ fasting more acceptable than the cheerfulness suitable to sab- “ baths and feasts, provided that thy cheerfulness be under due “ regulation, and with a perfect heart,’ and so on. (He has gone “ to some length in explaining this matter, as you may see by “ reference to the passage itself). The radical principle then “ is that the purpose of our heart must be to serve the God of “ heaven, and that it be constantly borne in mind that he who “ ‘tries the reins and heart’ will judge the secrets of our hearts, “ and call us to account with respect to all the meditations and “ reflections and passions of our souls, for our cheerfulness and “ our melancholy, our sorrow and our gladness; and this is the “ meaning of the passage we are now considering; ‘Rejoice, be “ cheerful, O youth, in thy childhood, for those are the days of “ cheerfulness, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy

9 teritum fuerit"). Lætare, juvenis adolescentiâ tuâ, et mens tua te exhilaret in juvenili tuâ ætate, et i quorsumcunque te ferat animus tuus et oculorum tuorum visus; at scito Deum te in judicium de his

"childhood, and thou mayest also walk in the ways of thy "heart and in the satisfaction of thy eyes without being guilty "of sin, if thou ever remember and forget not that God will "bring thee to judgment concerning all these things, and that "thou art about to give account before him as to what portion "thou hast assigned to each faculty of body and soul; for the "natural propensities of man, and the enjoyment derived from "the sense of sight were given to him at the beginning of the "creation for a purpose and an end pleasing to the Creator; "and if a man bear in mind the day of his account to which "I have alluded, he will be sure to direct them aright, and in "such a way as will be for his highest good and his happiness "in the life to come, and will assign to each of them as he "ought to do its due measure and portion without excess or "defect." And as to the injunction of Scripture, Numb. xv. 29, "'Ye shall not go astray (*תְוַיָּא*) after your own hearts and "your own eyes;' there can be no doubt that all that is for- "bidden is departure from the middle course, and that it is "implied by the next words, 'which ye used to go a whoring "after,' that they do not lead man into sin unless he goes a "whoring after them, i. e. pursues them to excess and exclu- "sively to the forgetfulness of his duty to God; which he will "not do if he recollects that for all these things God will bring "him to account." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Ver. 8. Some translators render *כִּי-שָׁפֵא חֲבֵל*, "All that cometh," or "is about to be," "will be in vain;" as if it were an independent proposition. But if this were the case there

omnibus adducturum esse. Et amove ex animo tuo 10
 mœrorem, et dispelle malum a corpore tuo; nam ju- CAP.
 ventus et adolescentia evanescunt; at memento quo- XII.
 que Creatoris tui in diebus juventutis tuæ, quamdiu
 neque dies mali veniunt, neque accedunt anni de-
 quibus dices, "Nil est mihi in illis gratum," quam- 2
 diu non obscurus fit sol atque lux et luna et

would have been an athnack under יְמִין. I have therefore taken these words, as Mendelssohn has done, to be included under יָזַר בֵּין, (יָזַר being omitted with an abruptness frequent in Hebrew; see Note at xii. 9) and בָּא to be not the participle but the preterite. The sense will then be, "Let him at the same time bear in mind that many may be the days of darkness to come, (and) every thing which has past (all his past happiness and cheerfulness) fruitless and in vain;" where the "days of darkness" are those of adversity in this life, not of punishment in the life to come.

Ver. 9. The Keri on בְּמֹרְאָה is בְּמֹרְאֵי.

Ver. 10. "Youth will not last for ever, but presently vanish away; therefore you should improve it while it lasts. שְׁחָרִית is derived from שְׁחָר, 'aurora,' as in the phrase בְּשְׁחָרֶת עֲלָה, 'for dawn arose;' or in the verse, 'Then shall thy light break forth as the morning dawn (*רְחִקָּה*).' Just as youth was compared to the dawn of morning, old age was compared to evening, as in the verse, 'In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening remit not thy hand,' alluding to the industrious employment of old age as well as youth. Or possibly שְׁחָרִות may be cognate with the word שְׁחָרָה, 'black,' with reference to the hair, which in youth has not become hoary." Mendelssohn.

NOTE. This verse means, "Do not distress and vex thyself

אֱלֹהִים יְבָאֶה הַאלֹהִים בְּמִשְׁפָּט : וְהַסְּרֵב גַּעַם מֶלֶךְ¹⁰
 וְהַעֲבֵר רַעַת מִבְּשָׂרֶךְ בִּיהִינְלוֹת וְהַשְּׁרוֹת הַבְּלִי :
 APP. II.
 וּכְלָא אַת-בּוֹרָא יְמִינֵי בְּחֻרְותֵךְ עַד אֲשֶׁר לְאִזְבָּא
 יְמִינְךָ וְהַגְּנִיעַ שְׁנִים אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמֶר אַיִן-לִי בְּהַסְּמֵךְ
 חַפֵּץ : עַד אֲשֶׁר לְאַתְּחַשֵּׁךְ הַשְּׁמֵשׁ וְהַאֲזֵר וְהַיְרֵחַ²

in thy youth, but enjoy it knowing that like the morning-dawn it will soon vanish away.” It need hardly be observed that שְׁרוֹת and יְלִידָה are in the singular number. I have rendered the latter “the morning of life.”

Ver. 1. “‘The evil days’ means ‘old age.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. This verse is closely connected with that which precedes it, and Solomon thus the third time exhorts the young to be cheerful in the enjoyment of life, along with a constant recollection of duties to be performed, and of the transitory nature of all earthly things. Similarly in Section x. he three times inculcates the duty of neither judging harshly of others, nor supposing that all the world are just and good. Some manuscripts and editions read בּוֹרָא ק, striking out the Yod, in order to make it in the singular number. This however is unnecessary, as we find in Is. liv. 5, “דָּבָר בְּעֵלֶיךְ עַשְׂתָּךְ,” “The Lord is thy husband *and* thy maker,” where “husband” and “maker” are both in the plural number. And in Prov. ix. 1, חַכְמָה, “wisdom,” is used as a singular. There are instances of a “plural of excellence.”

Ver. 2. “By reason of old age the moisture of the eyes becomes thickened; and often it seems to him in consequence as if clouds passed before his eyes which hide the light, or “in other words impair his sight; and this moisture collects till it runs down; and this happens repeatedly, as is implied

3 וְהַכּוֹבָדִים וְשָׁבּוּ הַעֲבָדִים אַחֲרֵי הַגְּשָׁם : בְּזָמֶן שִׁזְׁעָנָה
שְׁמָרִי הַבָּיִת וְהַתְּעוּתָה אֲנָשֵׁי הַחַיל וּבְטַלְוָה הַטְּחִנָּנוֹת
4 בְּעֵת מַעֲטָה וְחַשְׁכֵי הַרְאָות בָּאֲרָבוֹת : וְסָגְרוּ דְלָמִים
בְּשָׁוק בְּשִׁפְלָה קָול הַטְּחִנָּה וַיְקַומֵּן לְקוֹל הַצְּפֹור וַיַּשְׁחֹזֵק

“ by the expression, ‘The clouds come again after the discharge of tears.’ For did not the same cause of dimness recur, the ‘discharge of the moisture from the eyes would cause the power of sight to return in perfection.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Observe that the נ before שׁבֵי is conversive, and brings שׁבֵי into the same tense as תְּחִשֵּׂךְ, the last verb which preceded it in the same sentence.

Ver. 3. “‘The keepers of the house,’ signifies the hands “and arms, because these defend the body, and prevent harm “from happening to it; and ‘the strong men,’ is a name for “the thighs by which the whole body is supported and which “in old age become bent from excessive weakness. ‘Those that “look out at windows’ are the eyes. צְעִיר is from the same “word עִיר which we find in Esth. v. 9, יְהִי כָּם לֹא יְהִי, ‘He rose “not, nor moved,’ and it means, ‘trembling and quaking will “take hold of them.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Mendlessohn says nothing in his commentary about מַעֲטָה. The Rabbinic commentators are very unwilling to allow it an intransitive signification, because it is in the Pihel conjugation. Such instances,, viz. where the Kal and Pihel have both an intransitive sense, are rare, but they do sometimes occur (see Note at x. 10); and this is probably one of them. They would translate it, “Because they have made small (i. e. ground) corn *so long*,” or “because they have *already* ground *the* corn,”

sidera, neque rediunt post pluviam nubes; *sicut fiet*
 3 quo tempore domūs custodes tremebunt, et viri
 robusti incurvescent et cessabunt molitrices quum
 paucæ factæ erunt, et caligabunt spectantes per
 4 fenestras, claudenturque fores in plateā submisso
 molitionis sonitu, et subsiliet *dominus* ad avis vocem,

or else, “because they have diminished *their grinding*.” The last rendering involves a truism, and the two first are very far-fetched. It is better to render בַּיִם, “when,” (a sense which it must bear in Hos. xi. 1,) and מְעֻמָּדִים, “they have become few.” And since יְהִי before each of the other verbs is conversive, בַּיִם will then mean, “when they shall have become few.” Solomon in this and the next verse compares a man to a regal mansion, and his limbs and senses to the several classes of its household, the thighs to “the men of war,” the arms to “the porters at the gate,” the teeth to “the maidens that grind corn,” the ears and voice to “the singing girls,” the eyes to “the ladies who sit and look out at the windows;” for טְהָנוֹת and חֶרְאֹות are both feminine, and the first may mean “ancillæ molitrices.” Before ver. 3, understand “as,” i. e. “as it will be.”

Ver. 4. “‘The doors’ signify the outward apertures of “the body, and ‘the sound of the grinding’ refers to the digestion of food, and its being ground and dissolved in the “stomach; for when this is impeded all the bodily organs are “obstructed in their functions. ‘And one will start up at a “bird’s note,’ means that the old man will be roused from his “sleep even by the chirping of a bird. ‘And all the daughters “of song shall be brought low.’ This implies that the pipes of “the lungs from which the voice proceeds shall fail in performing their functions; for an old man from weakness is unable “to sing or exert his voice.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. The metaphor of the house is here carried on.

et deprimentur omnes cantūs filiæ, timebuntque 5
 etiam alta, et terrores erunt in viâ, et florebit
 amygdala, et pigrescat (*vel* onusta sibi fiet *vel* onustam
 se reddet) cicada, et extinguetur concupiscentia,

The old man is compared to a house whose inmates are in a state of consternation and dismay, where the usual domestic operations are suspended, the doors are closed as in time of mourning, the lord of the mansion starts with anxious fear at every noise, and all sounds of joy are mute. I have rendered סְגִרֵי בְּשָׂרִים “one will start up,” but it probably refers to the master of the house, and therefore metaphorically to the mind which animates the old man, which is so easily alarmed and agitated; while the other clauses of these two verses refer to the domestics of the house, and metaphorically to the limbs and senses of the body. “The sound of the grinding being low,” refers either, as Mendlessohn takes it, to the operations of digestion, or to the mastication of food in the mouth, since whichever of these be suspended the consequence expressed by סְגִרֵי בְּלֹתִים בְּנֹות בְּשִׁיר will equally take place. Some have interpreted בְּנֹות בְּשִׁיר to mean “the ears.” Probably these as well as “the lungs and throat” are intended. They are all expressed by “the powers of song.” It would be useless to enumerate instances in which the word בַּת, “daughter,” is used in Hebrew merely to express the subject of which the predicate is some noun of quality with which it is in a state of construction. Observe that the first בַּת in this verse is conversive and the others are not, so that all the verbs have a future signification. The word בְּלֹתִים is in the dual number with an obvious allusion.

Ver. 5. “The old man is constantly in alarm from the “risings and inequalities in the road lest he should stumble “over them, and continually meets with something to terrify

כָּל־בָּנֹת הַשִּׁיר : גַּם מְגֻבֶּה יַרְאֹו וְחַתְּחִתִּים בְּרַךְ 5
וַיְנַאֲצֵן בְּשָׁקֶר וַיַּסְתַּבֵּל חַנְבָּב וַתִּפְרַט אַבְיוֹנָה בַּיְהָלָךְ

" him on his way. The word **חַתְּחִתִּים** is from **חַתָּת**; the first " and third letters of which are doubled, and the middle one " suppressed. 'The almond-tree shall flower;' is the Hiphil " from **נוֹץ**, the **N** preceeded by tzere being put for **ו**, preceded " by chirek. So we find in the Canticles, **הַנְּצָזֵן דְּרַמּוֹנִים**, 'The " pomegranates have flowered.' The allusion is to the hoary " hair which comes quickly upon a man just as the almond- " tree flowers early, before the other trees; for in Jer. i. 11, " 'The rod of an almond-tree' is used as an emblem of speedy " accomplishment. The commentators explain by **יִסְתַּבֵּל חַנְבָּב** **בְּרִיתָה** **אִיבָּרִי הַהֲולָדָה**, i. e. **יִסְתַּבֵּל אִיבָּרִי הַהֲולָדָה**, 'will become a " burdensome appendage to him;' and agreeably with this ren- " dering we may understand after **תִּפְרַט** the word **תִּפְרַט**, which is " often united with it, and translate **וַתִּפְרַט אַבְיוֹנָה**, 'and carnal " desire will break its covenant with the body,' i. e. 'will desert " it.' For **אַבְיוֹנָה** comes from **אַבְבָּה**, 'cupivit,' the place of the " **ה** being supplied by **ו**, (as is the case in the inflexions of " such verbs), and means 'desire,' 'carnal appetite.' Solomon " next remarks that this timidity and imbecility arise from " the apprehension of death, and that all these symptoms of " decay come before as precursors of death, like the hired " mourners who walk in procession before a funeral, and that " they visit the body as if to warn it of approaching dissolu- " tion. Now if I were sure that **חַנְבָּב** and **אַבְיוֹנָה** were names " of well-known fruit-trees, I should have been for interpreting " the passage in this way, 'that the symptoms of old age come " quickly upon us, just as (1) the almond-tree flowers, the

6 הָאָדָם אֶל־בֵּית עַלְמֹו וִסְבַּבּוּ בְּשָׁוק הַסּוֹפְרִים : עַד

“**אֲבִיּוֹנָה** ‘becomes loaden’ with fruit, and ‘the **תְּנַבֵּב** bears fruit’ ‘in a very short space of time;’ and then instead of being ‘the Hiphil from **פָוֵר** would necessarily be derived from the ‘verb of which **פָרִי** is the verbal noun, viz. **פָרָה**, which ‘would not give **תְּפִירָה** regularly, but **תְּפִירָה** or **תְּפִירָה**; this however would not have been of much importance. It is true that the Rabbins called a certain kind of caper by the name **אֲבִיּוֹנָה**, (possibly on account of its medicinal qualities) but there is no evidence whatever that **תְּנַבֵּב** was ever used ‘as the name of a tree, and consequently we must interpret ‘the passage as above.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Another reason why the old man should be afraid of what is high, is his short and asthmatic breath which torments him in walking up-hill. The metaphor of the house ends with the last verse. The **שָׂקָר** ought to mean some tree with a white blossom as well as one that flowers early, whereas the almond has a pink blossom; and the property of flowering early is inapplicable here except on the second interpretation proposed by Mendlessohn which he decides to reject. This interpretation would certainly be far-fetched, on account of the extreme abruptness which it would compel us to recognize in the original.

סְבַל is “to carry,” “to be burdened,” and according to Buxtorf signifies in the Hithpahel, “to make oneself burdensome,” i. e. “to cause another to be burdened,” but it would be better to render it, “to become a load or burden to oneself.”

תְּנַבֵּב occurs in other passages of Scripture, and means there “a locust or grasshopper,” a creature remarkable for the nimbleness of its movements, and hence the Rabbinic explanation of it in this verse. Setting aside however that explanation as not re-

(quum abibit homo in domum suam æternam) et
6 *jamjam* circumibunt in plateâ lugentes; quamdiu

markable for good taste, we may suppose the word חָנֵב metaphorically to express, “one as nimble as a grasshopper,” and יִסְתַּבֵּל הָחָנֵב would then mean, “and he who was once all agility and vigour will become a burden to himself, i. e. become tardy in all his movements, as if he carried a heavy load;” literally, “the very grasshopper will become inactive.” If we choose to render literally, like אֲבִיָּנָה which follows, we must take Buxtorf’s interpretation of יִסְתַּבֵּל and translate “the grasshopper (the lightest of creatures) would be burdensome to him,” i. e. “its weight would be felt by him.” I have adopted the former sense in the English Version.

For instances of the Hiphil of פֹּרֶר united with בְּרִית, vide Is. xxxiii. 8, Ezek. xvii. 16, where the Hiphil means “to frustrate,” “to cause to fail.” Perhaps it may mean here simply “to fail” intransitively, and then בְּרִית need not be understood.

I prefer to render כי in this verse “when,” (a sense which it must bear in Hos. xi. 1) rather than “because.” Mendlessohn adopts the latter, and explains it by saying that the old man’s impotence and timidity arise from apprehension of approaching death. But this is a far-fetched notion and hardly a correct statement; besides חָאָרָם, as I have already observed, always means “man,” abstractedly, or “a man,” generally, which is its sense here, whereas if כי be rendered “because,” we must take it to mean “the man,” “the particular old man spoken of before,” which it cannot do, and I therefore render the passage, “when a man is going to his eternal home, and the mourners (precursors of death) will be, as it were, passing round the streets,” i. e. general decay will

neque longe distat *ab aquâ* funis argenteus, neque conteritur cisterna aurea, neque frangitur hydria

be giving notice of his approaching end, just as mourners of the approach of a corpse. Observe that this verse is all included under the phrase, “in the day that,” at the beginning of the last verse. “The house of his eternity,” is put for “his eternal house,” just as the “days of my vanity,” is for “my vain,” i. e. “transitory days.” The interposition of the participle **דָלֵךְ**, which itself is used as a future, does not deprive the **י** before **סַבְבִּי** of its conversive power, any more than the intervening clauses containing an infinitive mood and a participle between the future **יִשְׁלַח** and the word **וְהַשְׁתַּחֲווּ** in 2 Kings v. 18, deprive the latter word of the future signification given to it by the **י** on account of the preceding future **יִשְׁלַח**, (a circumstance which determines that Naaman is there entreating indulgence for the future, and not merely forgiveness for the past). In fact the clause **כִּי הַזְּלֵךְ וּכֹ** “when a man is going to his eternal home,” may be read as in parentheses.

Ver. 6. “**רַקְעַנְתָּ**,” the reading of the Keri, means, ‘shall become entangled, like the links of a chain,’ (**רַתִּיק** is ‘a chain,’) and the reading of the Chetib **רַקְעַנְתָּ** means, ‘shall be far from reaching to the water,’ i. e. be too short to reach it by reason of its being entangled or from any other cause. The sense is therefore the same whichever reading and rendering be adopted. The metaphor is here taken from the working of a well and the drawing of water. For the pail is fastened with a cord, and this is passed round a wheel, and by means of this contrivance the water is drawn up from the well and then poured out into a bowl or cistern which stands before the well. And if the cord be too short from any cause, or the pail or the wheel or the bowl for receiving the water be

אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָרַחַק חַבֵּל הַפְּסִיף וַתְּרַזֵּן גָּלָת הַזְּהָב וַתְּשַׁבֵּר

“broken, the well is no longer of any use. Such is the metaphor; and in all probability the thing signified by it is the “human heart with its veins and arteries, and the circulation of “blood through the body carried on by means of them; for the “arteries convey the blood from the left cavity of the heart “to all the limbs of the body small and great, and the veins “again collect the blood from all these limbs, and return it to “the right cavity of the heart; and from thence the blood “goes up through an artery to the lungs (there to be purified); “and from the lungs it returns by means of a vein to the left “cavity of the heart; and thus it goes on a circuit round and “round from the heart to the limbs and from the limbs to the “heart; and performs this circuit at least twenty-four or thirty “times in an hour; as is well known to anatomists, who have “carefully investigated the structure of the human frame, and “have shewn forth the wonders of God in the formation of “the choicest of his creatures. And it is ascertained that it is “impossible for man to live if these vessels are suspended in “their action, for the motion of the heart is the fountain of “man's life, and if the blood be at rest, it is impossible for the “heart to continue in motion, and vice versâ; so that the wise “man justly compared the revolution and circulation of the “blood by a poetic metaphor to the system of a wheel, rope, “pail, and bowl for drawing up water out of a well, and de-“signated the death of man consequent on the suspension of the “motion of the heart and lungs and arteries as ‘the entangle-“ment of the rope,’ and ‘the breaking of the wheel, pail, or “bowl;’ by any, or all of which circumstances the working of “a well is interrupted. And if we cannot establish an exact “correspondence in detail between all the features of the figure

7 בְּכָל עַל-הַמְּפֹיעַ וְנֶרֶץ הַגְּלִיל אֶל-הַבָּרוֹר : וַיֵּשֶׁב הַעֲפָר
עַל-הָאָרֶץ בְּשֻׁתְּחִיה וְתָרוּחַ תָּשֹׁב אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר
8 נִתְּנָה : הַבָּל הַכְּלִים אָמַר הַקּוֹחֶת הַבָּל הַבָּל :

"and the thing signified, we must recollect that it is usual "in poetry to introduce additional circumstances in the figure, "though there be no separate or distinct features in the thing "signified to correspond to them, and that this repeatedly "happens not only in works of song and poetry, but even in "the allegorical writings of the prophets; as Maimonides tells "us in the opening of his 'Book of Instruction.' He says, 'that "the metaphors of prophecy are of two kinds; that there are "some in which every part of the metaphor corresponds to "some particular feature of the thing signified; and others "where the metaphor taken as a whole corresponds only to "the general sense of the thing signified; and in this latter "species of metaphor many details will occur not a word of which "will give us any further information about the things signified, "but which are inserted merely for the adorning of the figure, "and the due arrangement of its portions, or from an excessive "degree of care in concealing the hidden meaning of it, viz. "the thing signified by it, &c.' Quem vide." Mendlessohn.

NOTE. תְּרִין. Here Yarchi reads תְּרֹזֵן, or at least uses this word for the other in his commentary. It is from the root רְצַץ, (which must signify here in the Kal, "to be broken," though it usually means "to break,") so that, as a Rabbinic commentator remarks, kibbutz is here unaccountably put for cholem, as the regular form is after the paradigm סְבִבָּה which makes חַסְבָּה. Observe that some of the Rabbins called "shurck" the פָּם מְלָא פָּם or "mouthful," and that those who did so called

ad fontem, neque conteritur trochlea ad puteum,
7 neendum redit pulvis ad terram qualis fuerat aut
8 redit spiritus ad Deum qui eum dederat. Vanissima,
inquit Concionator, (*vel* “Collector”), vanitas sunt
omnia.

the “kibbutz” “shurek,” (not using the name “kibbutz” at all,) and the cholem by its own name. Others on the contrary, as Yarchi, (vide his commentary on Exod. xv.) called the “cholem” מְלָא פִּים and the other two vowels by their usual names. And accordingly Buxtorf asserts that מְלָא פִּים means the “cholem,” which in the commentary on another place in this book it cannot possibly be. (Yarchi at that passage in Exod. xv. calls the point over רַאשׁ and נָא a מְלָא פִּים נָא, by which must be meant a cholem.)

גַּלְתָּה would seem to be here a large vessel to receive the water drawn up in the pail, which stood before the well, and into which the בָּקָד was emptied. We find this word in the same sense, viz. a vessel for containing fluid, in Judg. i. 15, and Zech. iv. 3.

רַזְבֵּן would regularly be the preterite or participle Niphal from רָזַב, “to run,” after the form מָגַן from גָּנָן, or from קָרְבָּן from קָרְבָּן. But in this place it must be an irregular form for רַזְבֵּן the preterite Niphal of רָזַב.

Ver. 7. “Here the wise king develops his opinion in a form agreeable with the law and with sound wisdom, that “the soul of man is given to him by the Former of all “things, and that it is not a mere accidental quality of the “body, but a being distinct and created separately from it, “not circumscribed by the limits of space, but surviving the “death of the body, and then returning to God who gave it, “when the body returns to the dust. And now it is clear that

SECTIO DECIMA SEXTA.

Et quo sapientior fiebat Concionator (*vel* “Col-⁹
lector”) eo magis usque scientiam docebat populum

“ my interpretation of former parts of this book was correct, and
“ that it was never Solomon’s intention to raise doubts about
“ the fundamental principles of the law, without afterwards
“ removing them.” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. Observe that this as well as the whole of the last verse is included under the phrase נִשְׁאָר לֹא, “quamdiu non.” Mendlessohn seems to treat it too much as an isolated maxim, and to be inclined to extract more from it than it really contains. His previous interpretations of the passages he alludes to do not need any corroboration from this or any other passage.

NOTE. Ver. 8. We find the definite article הַ here placed before קְרֻתָּה, because in this place it is a noun of quality, whereas in vii. 27, where הַ does not precede it, it is an abstract noun and means “a compilation,” or “the method of compilation.” Observe that the definite article הַ never precedes abstract nouns. Besides in vii. 27, קְרֻתָּה is marked as an abstract noun by being used as feminine, whereas here it is masculine.

Ver. 9. “ ‘The more the Compiler became wise,’ the more
“ he taught the people knowledge, listened to it from others, (or
“ ‘weighed it in the balances of reflection’) ‘investigated it by

THE SIXTEENTH SECTION.

וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁחִיה קָהֵלֶת חֲכָם עֹז לְמַר-לְעֵת אֶת-הַעַם ۹

“his intelligence, and set in order many proverbs;” i. e. ‘composed’ them, ‘for he spake three thousand proverbs,’ the object of all of which was either the instruction of others, “or the pursuit of wisdom and investigation. **לְעֵת** is either “derived from the same root as **מְאֻגִּים**, ‘balances,’ and signifies “that he weighed one portion of knowledge against another, “or from **אָז**, ‘an ear,’ meaning that ‘he inclined his own ear “to hear,’ or that ‘he encouraged others to hear.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **וַיֹּאמֶר** is here an adverb, as in the next verse but one, and means little more than “more,” “in a superior degree,” just as when used as a noun it denotes “superiority.”

The sense of “weighing” which Mendlessohn is here inclined to attach to **לְעֵת** is entirely Rabbinic, and the name of a balance in Hebrew is clearly owing to the circumstance of the two sides of a balance being compared to two ears, and not to its derivation from any word meaning “to weigh,” there being none such in use except by the Rabbins who have formed it from **מְאֻגִּים**, “balances.” Aben Ezra wishes to make the Pihel in **לְעֵת** and **לְקַרְךָ** bear a causative sense, and **לְעֵת** be governed by them, and construes, “he taught the people knowledge, and made them listen to it and investigate it.” But the Pihel is a transitive and not necessarily a causative conjugation, and the

10 אָנוּ וַחֲקָרְתָּןִי מִשְׁלִים הָרֶבֶה : בָּקַשׁ קָהָלָת לִמְצָא
 11 כְּבָרִי-חַפֵּץ וּכְתוּב יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּבָרִי אָמֶת : כְּבָרִי חַכְמִים
 בְּרַבְנֹזֶת וּבְמִשְׁמָרוֹת גְּטוּעִים בָּעֵלִי אַסְפּוֹת גְּתַנְנוּ

transitive sense is preserved by rendering the clause thus, “and listened to it, i. e. knowledge (from others) and investigated it,” i. e. “sought for it diligently;” supplying after אָנוּ לִעְתָּה after and חַקָּר. These two verbs cannot govern מִשְׁלִים, as appears from the zakeph over חַקָּר, and the absence of נִ before תְּקֹנוּ, (which is an instance of the same abruptness of construction as in ver. 8, where נִ is omitted before הַבְּלֵל שָׁבָא); and אָנוּ cannot simply mean “gave ear,” transitively.

חַקָּר in the Kal means “to be set right or in order,” and in the Pihel, transitively, “to set right,” “to arrange,” “compose,” “correct.” Perhaps it means that he collected and published a correct edition of them, as is more fully expressed in the next verse.

Ver. 10. “He means that after all his research he tried “to clothe the results of it in graceful expressions and pleasing “phrases, and, while he wrote words of truth, i. e. gave the “most veritable statements, to exhibit them in a correct style “of composition, and with all the sweetness of poetry, in order “that they might the better be acquired and retained by the “minds of the readers, and make the deeper impression.” Mendelssohn.

NOTE. כתוב יִשְׂרָאֵל is literally, “written correctness,” i. e. “correctness of writing.” יִשְׂרָאֵל is in construction with כְּבָרִי, (words of this form, as חַדְשָׁה, “a month,” do not suffer any change in the state of construction; vide Hurwitz), and I accordingly render, “a correct style of writing words of truth.”

et auscultabat et perscrutabatur, *et multa componebat*
 10 proverbia. Petivit Concionator invenire verba placen-
 11 tia, et rectam veracium dictorum scripturam. Dicta
 sapientum velut stimuli sunt, et velut clavi infixi
dicta auctorum collectionum, tanquam ex unius cogi-

Ver. 11. “‘For the words of the wise are like goads in-
 “fixed in the heart of the intelligent hearer;’ and as for the
 “authors of compilations who select wise maxims from books
 “and narrations, and publish collections of them, he says,
 “‘Their words are like nails implanted in the soul of man;’
 “and this cannot happen without their making some impression.
 “As the wise man says to king Hakoozar, (5th Dialogue,
 “chap. 5) ‘Attentive minds receive impressions from the
 “warnings of the admonisher in the same degree as he ad-
 “monishes in pleasing expressions; and every truthful admo-
 “nation does at least some good; for if it sometimes fail in
 “turning the rebellious from his evil deeds, still it lights up in
 “his mind as it were a spark of fire, and he sees that such
 “and such conduct of his was bad, and this is the first and
 “therefore an important step in repentance, &c.’ (vid. Note at
 “p. 352.) The word רַעַת is probably used here in a sense cog-
 “nate with that of רַעַי in Ps. exxxix. at the verse, ‘Thou un-
 “derstandest my thoughts afar off,’ viz. in that of ‘a thinker,’
 “‘a reflecting mind.’ And the sense of the passage will then be
 “that ‘those proverbs, speeches, and rules of wisdom, though
 “collected from many different quarters, agree in one respect,
 “viz. of teaching wisdom, just as if they had all been promul-
 “gated by one thinker and investigator.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. דְּרָבֶן is “the point at the end of a goad;” the
 handle was called מְלֵמֶד.

Mendlessohn understands בְּנִי as repeated before בָּעֵל.

tatione edita essent. At magis quam hæc, studeas, 12
mî filî, *rectè* admoneri; faciendi multos libros
nullus est finis, atque multa inutilis eruditio *mera*
corporis defatigatio.

נִתְנַח must be rendered either “as if they had been produced,” or “they might have been produced,” i. e. “edited.”

Yarchi translates רָעֵה “shepherd,” and says it means “God,” and construes the passage, “they have all been suggested by the one great shepherd.” But if this were correct, and Solomon intended here to allude to inspired writings, he would not speak of them so disparagingly as he does in the next verse as compared with the admonitions of wise counsellors. This in fact was the error into which the Talmudic doctors fell, (vide Prolegom. page 33) in justifying from this passage the preference of the Oral Traditions to Canonical Scripture. Solomon speaks of works of philosophy in general.

The best parallel to the use of רָעֵה in the sense which Mendelssohn here attaches to it is that of the same word in Hos. xii. 2, אֱפְרַיִם רָעֵה רִוחַ, “Ephraim is a thinker of wind,” i. e. “has ideas of wind.” Other instances of the same kind are Ps. xxxvii. 3, and Dan. v. 6, see Notes at i. 14, and vi. 6, where the word רָעֵית, “an idea,” is discussed.

Ver. 12. “But more than to all the contents of books
“take heed, my son, to attend to the advice of wise counsl-
“lors, and to walk in their ways. For recondite learning and
“reading and research are not the fundamental and chief matter,
“but practice. This it is which constitutes the radical principle
“of all perfection. It is impossible for every thing to be con-
“tained in books; and it is necessary for the wise man to hear
“and increase learning for himself, not to confine himself ex-
“clusively to the study of authors; for much study, without

מִרְעָה אַחֲרָה : וַיִּתֶּר מִהְפֵּה בְּנֵי הַזָּהָר עֲשֹׂות סְפִּירִים 12
הַרְבֵּה אֵין קָצֵן וְלֹהֶג הַרְבֵּה יִגְעַת בָּשָׂר :

“mental profit, wearies the flesh, and is of no good to body or “mind. **לֹהֶג** is ‘unprofitable reading and study.’” Mendlessohn.

NOTE. **וַיִּתֶּר** again is an adverb, “more.” “More than these” means “more than you study these.”

הַזָּהָר is here, probably, the imperative, **בְּנֵי** being a vocative. Some take it to be an infinitive, and we must then construe, “more important than these (i. e. the study of these) is to be well advised,” i. e. “to hearken to good counsellors.” We have already had **הַזָּהָר** in the sense, “to be well advised by others,” in chap. iv. 13. Solomon is here perhaps, either in the spirit of prophecy, or more probably from having already noticed his son’s unwise propensities, admonishing Rehoboam to have recourse to good counsellors rather than even to the books of wise men. Or this may be a general exhortation to practical prudence, as of higher importance than erudition. Some commentators rather ingeniously explain the first part of this verse thus, “And of whatever is more than these” i. e. “beside these” “beware, my son.” But the expression of so illiberal a sentiment cannot have been intended by Solomon. Besides it is clear that the Talmudists, whose opinion on the grammar and rendering of the passage must be respected, though we reject the inference they draw from the verse, did not understand the words **וַיִּתֶּר** or **הַזָּהָר** in this way; but that since they explained the passage as a statement of the superior excellence of oral counsel to the maxims derivable from books, they must have rendered **וַיִּתֶּר** “more,” not “beside,” and **הַזָּהָר** “to be well advised,” as Mendelssohn has done.

THE SEVENTEENTH SECTION.

—

13 סֹף דָבָר הַפֶל נִשְׁמָע אֶת-הָאֱלֹהִים יֵרָא וְאַתֶ־
 14 מִצּוֹתָיו שִׁמְרוּ בִּזְהָרָם : כִי אֶת-כָל-מִעֲשָׂה
 הָאֱלֹהִים יָבָא בִמְשֻׁפְט עַל כָל-גִּעְלָם אִם-טוֹב וְאַסְטָר
 רַע :

NOTE. Ver. 13. Here we have another of the Masoretic “literæ majusculæ.” The cabalistic sense attached to them by the Rabbins of indicating emphasis or importance is unusually applicable in this case. For some of their explanations of the reasons of the occurrence of the literæ majusculæ et minusculæ in each place where they are found, see Buxtorf’s Tiberias, or “Discussion on the Masora.” He omits the more curious and far-fetched.

דָבָר means here the “subject” of the book.

כִי זֶה כָל-הָאָדָם is translated by some, “for this is the duty of all men,” “for this belongs to all men,” but it is more literally rendered, “for this is the whole of man,” i. e. “the sum and substance and end of man’s existence,” (as כָל-הַיּוֹם means “the

SECTIO DECIMA SEPTIMA.

13 Finem totius sermonis audiamus; Deum reverere, et præcepta ejus serva; hoc enim est totum
 14 hominis *officium*. Namque omne factum adducet Deus in judicium, de omni occulto *eius proposito* sive malum sit sive bonum.

whole of the day, &c.") or, as the Rabbins express it, עיקר שפט האדם ותכלית האדם, "the foundation and end of man."

Ver. 14. על means "concerning," "with reference to," every secret motive. So it is used in Jer. ii. 35, רגנני נשפט אונותך על אמרך, "Behold, I am contending in judgment with thee concerning thy saying," i. e. "about what thou hast said," where the prophet is addressing Jerusalem. And in the same sense we have met with it several times in this book, as at iii. 18, על קברות וכו', "Concerning the saying of the sons of men, &c." and vii. 10, "Thou wouldest not have asked wisely about this, על זה."

The "סימן יתמן" occurs at the end of this verse; for an explanation of which see Prolegomena, page 90.

NOTE. At chap. xi. 9, and xii. 11, Mendlessohn quotes certain Hebrew dialogues between king **הַכֹּהֵן** and a philosopher, who is there called his “friend.” **הַכֹּהֵן** or **בָּנָה** is the name (probably a fictitious one) of a king who in these dialogues is supposed to have entered into controversy with a contemporary Jewish Rabbi, and to have been converted by him to Judaism. All this, as well as the arguments used in the controversy, is described in a very celebrated work, of which Rabbi Judah Aben Tibur is supposed to be the author or translator from the Arabic, and which Mendlessohn here quotes. This Rabbi it was who translated into Hebrew the Moreh Nevochim of Maimonides, which was written originally in Arabic; and the obscurity of his style accounts for the much greater difficulty of this book as read in the Hebrew than of the Yad Hachazakah, which was written in Hebrew by Maimonides.

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The following are specimens of Mendlessohn's Commentary
in the Rabbinic Hebrew.

Chap. iv. 1. "ג." א., page 189.

וחוץ סנה רבמינה כתולדת הנפש לו תומיח היה לך פהדים מין
פספק, חכל סכתי ורלהית היה כל בעשוקיס חסר נפשיס תחת פסmiss,
תחת מעסלת אליהם טהור עיביס מרחות כרע, ועת כל היה רוי
רויה בעשוקיס זוכיס ונחנמיס במר נפשס, וחין לאס מנחס,
ועשוקיס מכווקיס היהות ככם ותווך סביזס אל כל חסר ידע וahas
כפופיס תחת ידיס וחוין לאס מנחס, וכ"א מושיע ותומין, ווועס כן
סוח חיין ספק טהדר כחסר הערנו, כי עת לכל צפץ ולכל מעשה
סס, ווועלאיס יכין היה בעזק ווועזק במשפט, ווישן לאס נגמואס.

Chap. ix. 3. ט."ג., page 284.

זה רעד, היה ישאר שדרר קה כמות טאות בעה"ז דלי פרחון
טהלוס, צודאי ור רע גמור וווחלט כי מקרת חדך הכל, כי חסר
חכו רוחיס תחת פסmiss על פהרכן, חיין פגדלה צין עזקה בטוטן לטעון,
נדיקת פגדייך ורטעת פרטע חמלוס תעופינה, דלי תועלת לטוב, וכדי
נון לחוטע, פסופט כל פהרכן לו יעסה משפט?, חילאה אלן מעול
וandi מרטע, ואריי חיין לך עול ורטע ווומס מסיות מקרת חדך נדיק
ולרטע בכל סמנויות כלו דלי פגדלה וכדי נסיבות פnis: והננה כן
בטענה הוות יי' ח"ז בסס מעות משפט נגד נדיק, וווטסיף עוד
טענה פnis, בסס נגד פקוטן סמניטיך יי' עול נמייק בסס היה לו

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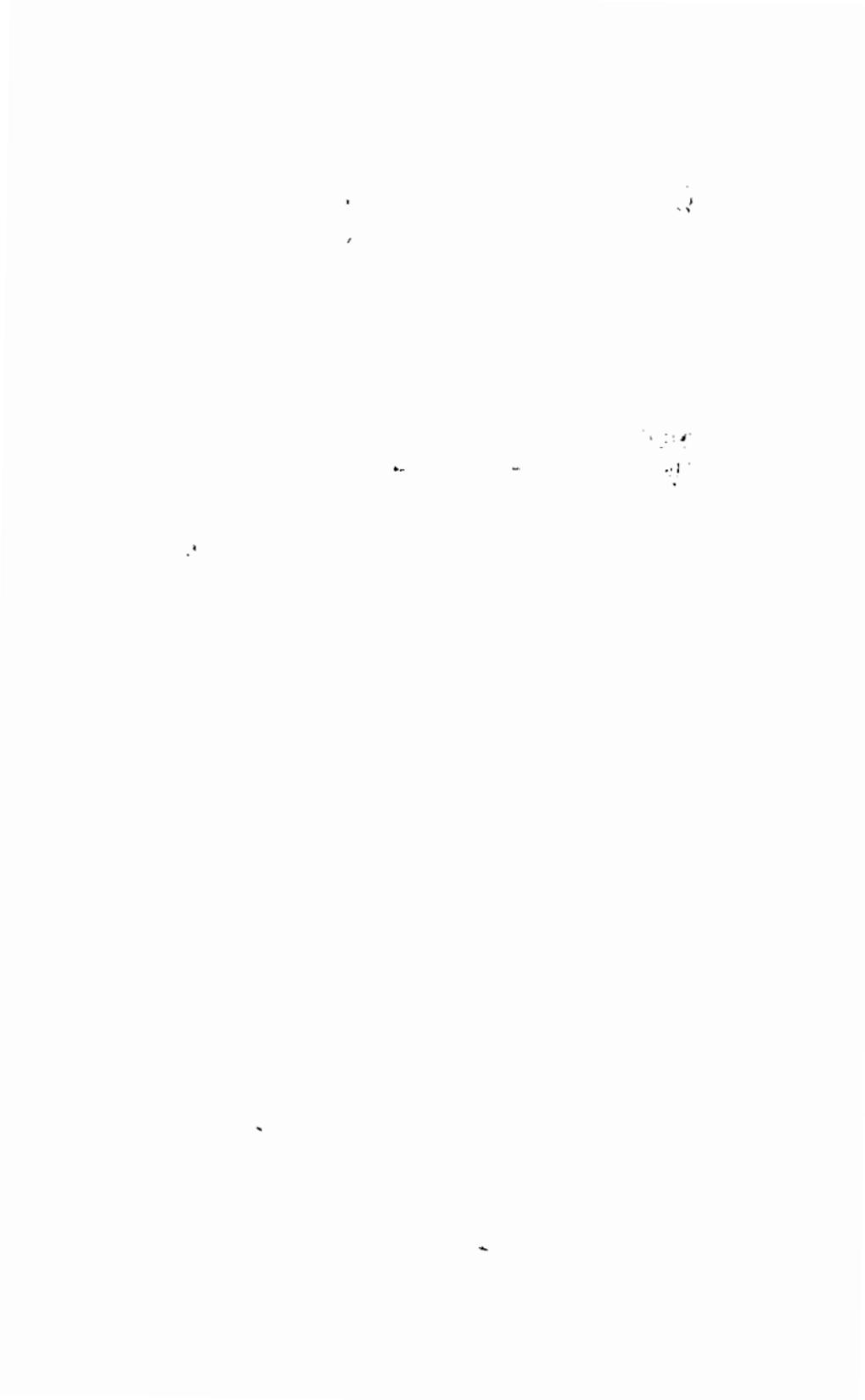
יב." יא" Chap. xii. 11.

בי' דברי המכמים בס כהרכנות תחוגות בלבב השומע במסכיל, ובעל' חספות בס פלקוטי' מפני ספריס ומפני ספריס זכריו חמם וחנרים מס' חמורים, חמר זדרני' געל' חספות פלאו כמסמרות נתועיס וקנואי' נפש יהודס, ווי' חפר מבתאי' טיעטו רוסס מה, נחלס חמר שכם למלך הכהור, נפשות סוממות מקדחות רוסס על ידי תוכחת שומכיה כחפר יוכיכ' זדרני' מוקנדים, ויס' לכל תוכחה נחלת תועלת על כל פenis, וויס' לפערmis חיננה מסיבא חת' מהمراה משעתה הרע נש' תקוח ננטשו זדרני' שתוכחת שטי' כמו נינז אלס, ורואה כי שמעסה השוא רע, וויס' מלך וסתהלה מן התשוגה ע"ט: נתנו מרועה חד, יתכן טה' מעין מהסנה כמו בנת לרעי מרחוק, (טהלהים קל"ט) יחויר סכל פאטליים וטהורירים וכלאי' חמימה לך' שאס מלוקטיש מספריס הרגה, הנ' כלס יסכיאו לדבר חד נלמד אלס עת חממה ומוסר, נחלו נתנו כלס מרושה וטוקר חד.

The following is a specimen of the **באר המלות**, or "Verbal Commentary," see p. 274, Note to vii. 16.

תְּסֻמָּס, סֹעַדְנִין הַתְּפִיעָל וְגַם כֵּן לְחַסְרוֹן תְּיַוְּה הַתְּפִיעָל, שְׁגַן
 טֶלֶת תְּכַלְתְּה תְּיַוְּה הַתְּפִיעָל לְפִנֵּי מְחוֹתִיּוֹת וּסְעִזְמָן כִּי אֲסָר לְחַדְרִיאָס, וּסְרָחוֹי
 תְּסֻמָּס, שְׁגַן עַל פִּי כֵּן יַתְּכַן שְׁגַן דָּגֶשׂ כֵּן לְהַזְוֹת עַל חַסְרוֹנוֹס,
 כִּי כְּהֵן סִימָן מְקוֹמוֹ, לְוִי קְרִיחָתִת מְחוֹתִיּוֹת טֶלֶת יַתְּכַן כֵּן, גַּס שְׁפָסֶל
 שְׁפִיָּה מְנִינִין נְפָעֵל גְּנוּרָת נָמֵי כָּעֵן וּכְפָוֵי כָּלָמְדָר, שְׁסָר יְקָרָחוֹת גְּנִינָה
 יְרוֹגָעַ, כִּיּוֹתְכּוֹן, וּסְעִזְמָנוֹן.

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